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THE STORY OF MY LIFE



Yours very faithfully
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THE STORY OF MY LIFE

BY THE LATE

COLONEL MEADOWS TAYLOR

AUTHOR OF 'CONFESSIONS OF A THUG,'
'TARA: A MAHRATTA TALE,' ETC.

EDITED BY

HIS DAUGHTER

WITH A PREFACE BY HENRY REEVE

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. I.

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS

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P R E F A C E.

FOR several years before his death, the writer of these Memoirs had been urged by his friends to leave on record some account of his adventurous and useful life. The materials at hand were authentic and abundant; for, not only was he possessed of an excellent memory and great powers of retaining and narrating numerous and complicated details with entire accuracy, but during the forty years he spent in India, he carried on a copious correspondence with his father and other members of his family, and a great portion of these voluminous letters has been not only preserved, but carefully transcribed in England. I venture, therefore, to say that nothing is related in these volumes upon vague recollection or traditional evidence, but every incident is told as it happened.

Although it was not the fate of Meadows Taylor to rise to a high rank in the civil or military administration of India, and he cannot lay claim to the distinction and fame which belong to the illustrious founders and servants of the British Empire in the East, there were circumstances in his career not less remarkable than in the lives of greater men. He was one of the last of those who went out to India as simple adventurers—to use the term in no disparaging sense, for Clive and Dupleix were no more—and who achieved whatever success he had in life solely by his own energy and perseverance, independent of the patronage of the great Company or the authority of the Crown. A lad of fifteen, after a few years spent at a second-rate school, and a few months in the drudgery of a Liverpool merchant's counting-house, is sent to Bombay upon a vague and fallacious promise of mercantile employment. It was long before the days of Indian examinations and Competition Wallahs. Arrived at Bombay, the house of business he was to enter proved to be no better than a shop, and its chief an embarrassed tradesman. By the influence and assistance of

a kinsman, a commission was obtained for the misfortune-stricken boy in the Nizam's military contingent. Thus only he started in life. But the stress of circumstances and the tenacity of his own character had already taught him the all-important lesson of self-reliance and independence. Already, on the voyage, he had commenced the study of Eastern languages, to which he applied himself with extreme assiduity in his new position, perceiving that until a man has mastered the language of a country, he can know little of its inhabitants, and may remain for ever a stranger to the intelligence and the hearts of those over whom he exercises authority. His perfect acquaintance with the languages of Southern India, Teloogoo, and Mahratta, as well as Hindostanee, was no doubt the foundation of his extraordinary influence over the natives of the country, and of his insight into their motives and character. It was also the first step to his advancement in his profession. At seventeen he was employed as interpreter on courts-martial, and recommended for much higher duty by the Resident; and at eighteen he found himself Assistant Police Superintendent of a district comprising a population of

a million souls. Nor were the duties of that office light. They involved not only direct authority over the ordinary relations of society, but the active pursuit of bands of dacoits, Thugs, and robbers, who infested a half-civilised territory. Occasionally, military expeditions were necessary to reduce some lawless chief of higher degree to obedience. The head of the police was, in short, the representative of law and order in a wild country. These duties, at this early age, Meadows Taylor performed, and with such success as to merit the notice of the sagacious old Minister of the Nizam, Chundoo Lall, and the approval of the Resident.

It would be superfluous in this preface to notice the details of his advancement in life, which are more fully related by himself in the following pages. But I may venture to point out one or two considerations on which the simplicity and modesty of his own nature forbade him to dwell. By mere perseverance and industry, he carried on the work of self-education through life, with very remarkable results; and this, chiefly, at military stations in the interior of the Deccan, with no advantages of books or Euro-

pean society. Having mastered the native languages, he soon found that the government of an Indian district and population means that English intelligence, integrity, and foresight are to supply all that is wanting in these respects to a less civilised people ; and he applied himself to make good from such resources as he possessed all these deficiencies. Thus he taught himself the art, and even invented a new method, of land-surveying, because the revenue settlement of the country depends upon it ; and without augmenting the burdens of the people, he largely increased the revenue of the State in several districts. He taught himself engineering, because the construction of roads, tanks, and buildings was an essential part of the improvement of the country. He acquired a considerable knowledge of law, both Hindoo, Mohammedan, and English, because he had to administer justice to the people ; and he framed for himself a simple code and rules of procedure applicable to a country where there were no courts of law and no written laws at all. He studied geology and botany, because he observed the direct bearing of these sciences on the productiveness of the soil. He brought to the

knowledge of Europe the curious antiquities of Southern India, so nearly allied in form to some of the remains of Ireland, Cornwall, and France. He beguiled his leisure hours with painting and music, in which he had, I know not how, acquired considerable proficiency; and he cultivated literature with no mean success, as is proved by the series of novels, beginning with the 'Confessions of a Thug,' in which the manners and superstitions of India are portrayed with wonderful fidelity, and by the 'Manual of Indian History,' which is the most complete summary in existence of the annals of that country. His various literary productions, which have stood the test of time, and still exercise a fascinating power over the reader, are not so much works of imagination as living pictures of the men and women amongst whom he dwelt. There is hardly a character in these volumes that was not drawn from some real person, whom he had seen and known in his various expeditions, or in the repression of crime. And he acquired, as if by nature, an extraordinary force and flexibility of style, which brings the native of India, with his peculiar forms of language, his supersti-

tions, his virtues, and his crimes, within the range of the English reader, as no other work has done. The tales of 'Tara,' 'Ralph Darnell,' 'Tippoo Sultaun,' and 'Seeta,' were designed by their author to mark the principal epochs of Indian history at long intervals of time, and the state of society in each of them; and they form a complete work, which deserves to retain a lasting place in English literature. And when it is considered that they were for the most part written by a young officer who spent his life in active service, remote from all literary society, they are an astonishing proof of natural genius. I mention these things, not by way of panegyric, but because I hope that many a young Englishman may enter upon the duties of an Indian career with this book in his pocket, and may learn from it what may be done, in the course of a single life, to develop and improve his own character and attainments, and to promote the welfare of the people committed to his charge.

But there is a higher element and a more important lesson in this record of a life spent in the service of India. Meadows Taylor gave to the

people of India not only his head, but his heart. He had the liveliest sympathy and affection for the natives of India. Thoroughly understanding their traditions and their manners, he treated men and women of all ranks with the consideration and respect due to an ancient society. The wild Beydurs whom he encountered upon his first arrival at Shorapoor—men who were the terror of the country and the myrmidons of the court—said to him, after their first interview, “We perceive that you respect us, and we will be faithful to you for ever.” And in the more polished spheres of Indian life he touched the pride of the native nobility with so light and kindly a hand, that they were as eager to court his friendship, as the peasantry were to receive his counsel and his benefits. British rule in India has, beyond all doubt, conferred the great benefits of peace and civilisation on the country ; but it is sometimes wanting in gentleness and sympathy. There lies probably its greatest danger in the future. Some examples there are of men who have touched the hearts of the natives and enjoyed in return their enthusiastic and devoted regard, such as the Lawrences, Outram, and Mal-

colm ; but they are rare. I think the author of these recollections was one of them. Wherever he went, the natives knew and believed that they had a protector and a friend. The sphere of his power and influence was not wide, at least in comparison with the vast extent and population of the Indian Empire ; but as far as it extended they were complete. Probably there were few men in India who, at the moment of the Mutiny of 1857, could have crossed the river into Berar without troops, and held a firm grasp on the passions of an excited people : and the confidence inspired by men of this character largely contributed to save the south of India from the calamities which were devastating the North-Western Provinces of Bengal. Not only was the maintenance of peace in the Deccan a matter of the utmost importance to the suppression of the disturbances in the North-West, but Colonel Taylor was able most materially to assist the operations of Sir Hugh Rose's army by moving up cattle and supplies, which were indispensable to the sustenance of the troops.

The chief object we have in view in giving these volumes to the world, and the chief object

of the author in writing them, is to impress upon those who may be called upon to take any part in the administration of India, and especially on the young men who now annually leave our schools and examination papers for that purpose, that their ability, happiness, and success in the great work before them, will depend very much on the estimate they form of the native character, and on the respect and regard they show to the natives in the several ranks of society. The highest are on a par with the oldest and proudest aristocracy in the world. The lowest are entitled to be treated as members of an old and civilised society.

Meadows Taylor was never, properly speaking, in the civil service of the East India Company or the Crown, nor did he hold any military appointment in the British Indian army. He was through life an officer of the Nizam. He never even visited Calcutta or Bengal. But the administration of the Nizam, both civil and military, is, to a certain extent, that of a protected government, and is largely influenced by the decisions and policy of the Governor-General of India in Council. When it became a question of

appointing an officer to administer a province, though that province might be a dependency of the Nizam, it was not unnatural that the selection of an English servant of that prince, without rank in the British service, should be viewed with some hesitation and jealousy, both at the India Board and at Calcutta. It was probably owing to this cause that during the administration of Sir H. Hardinge, and when Captain Meadows Taylor had barely surmounted his first difficulties at Shorapoor, he was disagreeably surprised by a note from the private secretary of the Governor-General informing him that the appointment of another agent at Shorapoor, unconnected with the recent events in that State, was required, and in contemplation. Upon the receipt of this intelligence, no motive having been assigned for the intended change, Captain Taylor's friends in England took steps to ascertain whether there were grounds to justify it. I find among my own papers the following letter to myself from the late Mr John Stuart Mill, better known to the world for his philosophical writings, than for the eminent public services he rendered for so many years, in the capacity of Examiner, or

Political Secretary, to the East India Company. It may be inserted here as the highest testimony to the merits of Captain Taylor as an administrator, from a most competent observer :—

INDIA HOUSE, 23d *Sept.* 1845.

MY DEAR SIR,—You can hardly feel more interested in preventing the removal of Captain Meadows Taylor from Shorapoor than I do myself, because (to say nothing of personal considerations) I have a very high opinion of the merits of his administration of Shorapoor. I may say, indeed, that his being at Shorapoor now is owing to me, for some expressions of approval and praise in a despatch written by me was what induced the Indian Government to suspend their intention of replacing him by a civil servant of the Company, and to refer the matter home. I have endeavoured to induce the Court of Directors to negative the proposition. I do not, however, expect to obtain anything so decided, as they do not think it right to fetter the Indian Government in its choice of instruments. But as the Court will certainly give no encouragement to the project, I think it will blow over, and Captain Taylor will remain.—Very truly yours,

J. S. MILL.

And in a second letter, written by Mr Mill a few days later, he added :—

Whatever may be the cause that is working against Captain Taylor, I am convinced that Fraser (the Resident at Hyderabad) has nothing to do with it. Fraser, as far as I know, has always written to Government very much in his favour. Captain Taylor is quite in error if he supposes that the Nuzzerana business has done him any harm. Fraser did not agree with him on that subject, but the home authorities and Sir H. Hardinge did, and do most strenuously.

The cloud did blow over. Captain Taylor's merits were acknowledged at home and at Calcutta, and he remained at Shorapoor many years. Indeed, when the arrangement was made with the Nizam for the liquidation of the claims of the British Government by the cession of certain portions of territory, the district of Western Berar was placed under the management of Captain Taylor; and the services rendered by him were so far eventually recognised by the Government of India, that he retired, after more than thirty-eight years' service, with the pension of his rank in the British service, not unaccompanied with honorary distinctions, which he valued.

The time is past when so adventurous and

singular a career is possible in India or elsewhere. The world grows more methodical, and routine takes the place of individual effort. But the same qualities of head and heart are still the only guides to success in the government of a people different from ourselves in race, religion, and manners, but united to Great Britain by a common allegiance and common duties.

HENRY REEVE.

FOXHOLES, 25th Sept. 1877.

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STORY OF MY LIFE.

CHAPTER I.

1808-24.

I WAS born in Slater Street, Liverpool, on the 25th day of September 1808. My father, Mr Philip Meadows Taylor, was the only surviving son of the Rev. Philip Taylor, of Old Court, Harold's Cross, in the county of Dublin. My mother was the youngest daughter of Bertram Mitford, Esq., of Mitford Castle, in the county of Northumberland, one of the most ancient Saxon families of England, which still flourishes, from its origin, beyond the Conquest, to the present time, in the enjoyment of its ancient privileges and estates.

My father's ancestors were of a North Lanca-

shire family, and have been traced to Lancaster, where they were known in the fifteenth century. They reckoned many men of sterling worth and reputation among their number; and one, Dr John Taylor, author of the 'Hebrew Concordance,' is well known to this day. The Taylors intermarried with the Martineau family, after the former had removed to Norwich, which became their stronghold; and there the pleasant friendly gatherings and intercourse with Mr and Mrs Barbauld, Sir J. E. Smith, and other celebrities of the time, are not yet forgotten.

Without making any boast of pedigree, I can at least claim descent from two ancient families of England—one Puritan, the other Royalist—and my parents faithfully preserved these hereditary distinctions to the last.

My father was educated partly in Germany, and there learnt to appreciate the advantages of rifles over ordinary muskets. He assisted in raising a volunteer rifle corps in Liverpool, which he commanded as executive captain, the Earl of Derby being the colonel; and thus had, I believe, the merit of being the first to introduce the rifle system into England. This fact was recognised by the War Office at a comparatively late period. In 1807, my father and mother

were married at Walton Church, Lancashire. Five sons were the issue of this marriage, three of whom survive, I being the eldest.

Soon after my birth my father removed from Slater Street to Brookfield, a pretty country-house near Liverpool; and later, for convenience in business, then very prosperous, to a house in Rodney Street, the most fashionable locality in the town at that time. I remember but little of Brookfield; and indeed my first memories of Rodney Street are dim and vague. The chief one is of my being attacked with croup, followed by a long severe illness, which changed me from a healthy, sturdy child into an ailing, delicate one, and necessitated my being sent to Ireland, to the care of my grandfather and aunts, for change of air. I grew querulous and weak, and, I fear, was a trouble in the house. I had named myself "King Pippin," and remember lying on the rug in the room I am now sitting in, piping out miserably that "King can't" or "King won't" when required to do anything. I grew stronger, however, and soon became my grandfather's constant companion in his strolls about the garden, holding on by his finger, and gradually losing my awe of his deep sonorous voice and imposing manner, as was proved by a speech recorded against me,

when, as he was seized by a violent fit of sneezing, I looked up in my grandfather's face, and said, gravely, "Grandpapa, what a chap you are for sneezing!"

In due course I returned to my parents in Rodney Street, and many memories flit across me while I write. On one occasion, while on a pond with some skaters at Street Court, Herefordshire, where my mother's sister resided, I had a narrow escape of my life. The ice broke under me, and I was with difficulty rescued—my cry being, "Help King! help King!"

I believe I could at this time read fairly, and could repeat a good deal by heart at the age of five. No great feat, truly; but I was never set up as a prodigy, nor did I begin Greek at three years old, like Mr Stuart Mill!

My wish was to become a merchant in those days, and, watching my opportunity, I ran away to find "papa's counting-house," and was discovered by a friend of my father's crying in the street, and restored to my dear mother, whose agony when she found I was missing was extreme. She feared I had been decoyed away for my beauty, and that she would never see me more. I was ordered to bed, without supper, by my father; but I well remember, as I lay there

sobbing, that my mother stole into the nursery with a bowl of hot bread-and-milk in her hand, and gave earnest thanks for my restoration to her beside my little bed.

Soon after this escapade, my brother Robert and myself were sent to a day-school to keep us out of mischief. Of what we learnt at the Rev. Mr Fearon's I remember but little. I suppose the rudiments of English and the earliest lessons in Latin ; but we were very happy, and it was the beginning of the little education I ever received.

Among the most distinct memories of these early days is that splendid illumination of Liverpool, the year of the peace of 1814. We elder boys were taken by our parents through the streets of the town ; and although those were not the days of gas and other brilliant effects, very beautiful devices were arranged with coloured oil-lamps, and our delight was unbounded.

Nor have I forgotten the chairing of Mr Canning and General Gascoigne, on their return as Members for Liverpool, after a severely-contested election. I remember my mother presenting a nosegay of flowers (bouquet would be the word used now) to Mr Canning, and the scarlet streamers with which it was tied, and how we children, standing on the steps, were cheering

with all our might, and were shown to him. I remember his laughing face and shiny bald head as he kissed hands to my mother and drove on — the flags too, the shouting crowds, the bands of music, and the windows filled with gaily-dressed ladies; and I remember how my mother, a true Mitford, insisted that her boys should wear the Tory colours, red and blue, in opposition to my father, whose sympathies were with the pink or Whig colours of the Seftons.

The same year I accompanied my parents to Norwich, where there was a gathering of the Taylor family; of this I have little recollection; but of our stay in London — including being taken in a wherry to Greenwich, and seeing Madame Saqui dance on a tight-rope sixty feet high—I have a very distinct impression, and also that I was a hero in the eyes of my brothers on my return.

It must have been about the year 1815-16 that my father's affairs became involved. He rejected all tempting offers to reinstate his business on borrowed moneys, which were freely pressed upon him; and having honourably discharged every claim, and given up the luxurious home in Rodney Street, to which his previous position had entitled him, he took a pleasant little villa

called Olive Vale Cottage, about three miles from Liverpool, to which he removed his family. My mother accepted her change of fortune with all the resignation, devotion, and nobility of her character, and was ever the true helper and comforter of her husband.

At Olive Vale Cottage we boys lived a very happy life. There was a pretty flower-garden which was our mother's great delight, and her carnations, pinks, and auriculas were the finest of their kind ; a magnolia and scarlet japonica were trained round the drawing-room windows, and showed her exquisite taste. There was a capital fruit and vegetable garden, which was my father's pride, and where he laboured diligently when he returned each day from his work in Liverpool. There was a poplar-tree too, in the highest branches of which we established a sort of nest to which we mysteriously climbed, to my mother's great dismay, and I remember my father calling to us to "Come down, you monkeys, and don't frighten your mother," while he at the same time betrayed no small pleasure in our accomplishing so manly an exploit. Although they were very poor, my parents were very happy, and very proud of their troop of noisy boys, who thrived well in the sweet country air.

The next event was my being sent to school. The one selected was kept by Mr Barron at Holt Hall, near Prescot, and I entered as a boarder. There were, I believe, about a hundred boys, and the school had a wide reputation. It was a rough place, although scarcely equal to the Yorkshire school of Mr Squeers; but I, fresh from the gentle presence and teachings of my mother, felt the change keenly, and was almost inconsolable — so much so, that I was sent home after a while, and when I returned to Mr Barron's, it was as a parlour boarder, a distinction which caused much jealousy, and subjected me to much torment. I was the youngest boy in the school, teased and bullied by all; but after I had received an enormous cake from home, which was divided among the boys, I grew more into favour, and even became a "pet" among them.

We rose at six in summer, partially dressed ourselves, and, with our jackets over our arms, went down to a stone bench in the yard, where stood a long row of pewter basins filled with water, and often in the winter with ice. Here, in all weathers, we washed our faces and hands, combed and brushed our hair, and went into the schoolroom a while to study; then were let out

to play till the bell rang for breakfast, consisting of fresh new milk, and a good lump of bread. At ten we were all in school again, and work went on, only interrupted by the instances of severe punishment which but too often occurred. The rod was not sparingly used, as many a bleeding back could testify, and I have often been obliged to pick the splinters of the rods from my hands.

We were well fed on meat, cabbage, and potatoes, and rice or some plain pudding; on Sundays we had invariably roast beef and Yorkshire pudding. We went into school again at three. At five school broke up, and at seven we had our suppers of bread and milk; afterwards we could study or go out within bounds as we pleased. Good Mrs Barron attended to our personal cleanliness and to our health; and at stated seasons, especially in spring, we were all gathered together in the dining-hall, where the old lady stood at the end of the room at a small table, on which was a large bowl of that most horrible compound brimstone and treacle. The scene rises vividly before me, as we all stood with our hands behind our backs, opened our mouths and received each our spoonful, swallowed it down as best we could—and had to lick the spoon clean too! Surely this was a

refinement of cruelty ! I presume I learnt something while at this school, for before me lies a letter from my father, praising me for the good conduct and diligence I had shown, and exhorting me to further exertions, with much sound advice on many points. A like letter was also received from my grandfather, the replies to which I had to write with great care and no blots, and which was afterwards found carefully preserved among his papers.

I could not have remained at Mr Barron's school longer than the close of the year 1817. The ill-usage I received increased, and I ran home at last and showed my mother my bleeding hands, and also my father when he came in. The distance I had run was no great feat for me, who was always selected "hare" in our games at "hare and hounds." Thus the Barron bubble burst. What was to be done with me next ? Had I really learned anything, except spelling, which was well knocked into me, and has stood me in good stead all my life ? I doubt whether I really had profited much.

My brother attended a small day-school in the village of Wavertree, and when I got home I was also placed there under Mr Newby's care. I believe he was a competent teacher if he chose,

but he was incorrigibly sleepy and lazy ; and when her husband fell asleep and we boys became uproarious, Mrs Newby walked in, quelled the tumult, and read her lazy helpmeet a sound lecture, which used to afford us intense amusement. She was a tall grim woman, with decided beard and moustache, and a strong Cumberland accent ; but she was very kind to us boys. A short time after my attendance at this school began, I received a bite from a dog as we were going along the lane one morning. It proved a very severe one, and I was very ill ; my parents were much alarmed, as I was delirious for some time, and it was three months before the wound healed. How vividly I remember my dear mother's anxious face and gentle loving care, and my little brother Selby throwing himself down on the grass and crying that he saw the sky open and the beautiful angels hovering over him and saying to him, " Meadows won't die ! " What did the child see ? Long years after I questioned him about this, and he said the vision was firmly rooted in his memory ! ·

Time passed on, but I fear my father's affairs did not improve, and there were many anxieties and privations at the Cottage ; and at length, after a visit to Dublin, on which I accompanied

him, my father accepted the charge of a large brewery in James Street, of which he was to be executive manager.

Does any reader remember the Dublin and Liverpool packets of fifty years ago? Stout cutters, with one narrow cabin for passengers and berths all round it; no wonder no one went across who could avoid it. We were three days and nights at sea; and as provisions were reduced to salt junk and ship's biscuit, we amused ourselves by catching gurnards off the Kish Bank, and these split and broiled were very good. After a short stay in Ireland we returned to Olive Vale Cottage. My father wound up his affairs in Liverpool, and we embarked with all our belongings for Dublin.

The house we occupied in James Street was large and handsome, and the brewery was a source of constant and varied delight. We helped, or imagined we helped, John Reilly, the cooper, to make and mend casks; and often shared his dinner of salt herring, potatoes, and butter, with old Segrave, the porter at the gate, who had a wooden leg.

My brother and I attended Dr Hutton's school as day-scholars. Dr Hutton taught Latin and Greek himself, and there were masters for French

and mathematics. The discipline here, too, was very severe. Was everything I learned always to be beaten into me? I made but little progress in classics, but delighted in mathematics and French, and even gained prizes in these.

There was little variety in our Dublin life. I well recollect the entry of King George IV., the procession, his portly figure, and gracious salutations to the ladies in the windows, and the deafening cheers of the crowd, on that glorious summer day. The event was a remarkable one in the history of Ireland, and its people accorded to their King a right royal welcome.

All this time my dear mother's religious teachings to us became, it seems to me now, more earnest and constant than before. From her I learnt the doctrines of the Church and the sublime sacrifice and atonement of our Lord; and how lovingly and carefully she taught us will, I am sure, never be forgotten by my brother or myself, and led to the feelings I have all my life experienced of love and humble devotion to our glorious Church.

In those days it was considered effeminate to teach boys to draw, or sing, or play on any instrument; accomplishments, therefore, were denied us. I had much desire to learn both

music and drawing, but it was not allowed. I was getting on with Latin and Greek, had entered the first class, and took a goodly number of prizes in French and mathematics.

Every boy, I suppose, has one decisive fight to record ; mine was with a big boy, the bully of the school. We had one encounter, in which I was severely handled. My father encouraged me, however, not to give in, and gave me private instruction, until I began to "see my way into science." Reckoning on another easy victory, my enemy one day called me a coward, and hit me. I returned the blow sharply. The odds were scarcely fair, as my adversary had on a jacket with a row of metal buttons down the front ; however, I fought on, hitting out as my father had taught me, and at last my foe lay down, begging my forgiveness, which of course was accorded. When I got home it was very evident what had occurred.

"You have been fighting again, sir," said my father, severely.

"Yes, sir, with J——," I replied.

"Did you lick him ?"

"I did, father, though he had buttons on his jacket."

"Bravo, my boy here's half-a-crown for you.

Go off and treat your backers, and J—— too, if you like.”

And so I did.

I do not know how it came about, but at the close of that half-year I was told that I was to go to Liverpool and enter the office of Messrs Yates Brothers & Co., West India merchants, and be articed to them for seven years. I did not like the prospect at all. I should leave my darling mother and my studies, in which I was beginning to take such pleasure. Why was I sent away? I am at a loss to imagine, and it is useless to speculate now, but so it was; and to the intense grief of my mother, I was taken away, young and utterly inexperienced, and placed as a boarder and lodger with Mr Hassal, a clerk in some office in Liverpool, who had been recommended to my father. I was duly introduced to Messrs Yates's office, in which were several young boys—learners like myself. Mr Ashton Yates, the senior partner, was invariably good to me, and I have a grateful memory of his kindness while I remained in the office. At first I was set to copy circulars, and such easy work; then I was promoted to being post-office clerk—not an easy task in those days, as the postage on letters sent and received was of considerable

amount and variety. I afterwards became one of the clerks for attending the discharge of cargoes, sitting in all weathers in a wooden shed with the Custom-house landing-waiter, entering, under their various marks, cotton bales, sugar hogsheads, and goods of all descriptions from the East and West Indies. It was a hard life; and day after day, in snow, frost, or rain, I have sat for hours together, shivering and benumbed with cold, being allowed an hour for my dinner, in which time I had to run two miles to eat it, and run back again. Sometimes a friendly captain would ask me to partake of his meal; and I have frequently shared a landing-waiter's lunch when offered. Our nominal hour for closing office was six o'clock; but I have often been kept till ten when there was a press of work. My last office was "assistant dunner," as it was called—i.e., the collection of moneys due; and late in the dark evenings have I, mere boy as I was, been walking the streets of Liverpool with thousands of pounds in bills, notes, and gold in my pocket. I was getting on; but I had enemies—why, I know not—who played me many a scurvy trick. My petty cash was often pilfered, my desk being opened by other keys. I was ordered on private errands for other clerks, and

when I refused to execute them, I was "paid off" by extra work and malicious accusations. These were, however, entirely disproved. I had a steady friend in Mr Yates, and persevered in my work. The pleasantest part of my duty was arranging the samples of cotton according to their quality; and I have been often called into the "parlour" to assist the partners in their decisions. I had a fine sense of touch, and became an adept in the manipulation of samples.

One incident I have never forgotten. I was returning to the office late one evening, when, passing by the door of a chapel, and hearing groans and cries, I looked in. A person stationed at the door invited me to enter and "save my soul." The place, a large one, was in profound darkness; a candle here and there only made the gloom more impenetrable. People of both sexes were sitting in the pews, and shrill piercing cries arose of "Save me!" "I'm going to hell!" "I'm damned!" "The devil has me!" "I'm burning, burning!" "Go away, Satan!" "Jesus has got me!" and the like, with prayers so profane and shocking that I dare not write them down. Sometimes one got up, man or woman, and gave his or her experience of sins and crimes, horrible to hear, but which, nevertheless, fascinated me. I know

not how long I stayed, but a girl sat down by me at last and whispered, "Come and kiss me, you beautiful boy—come away." I gained the door, and fled rapidly in the darkness up the street.

Early in 1824 the wretchedness I endured in the office reached its highest pitch, and malicious tales against me increased frightfully, accompanied by threats. I retorted by saying to those who were badgering me, that if I were not let alone I would tell certain things I knew of them. I was of course defied; but I felt ill—I had a fearful cough, and the doctor said I was threatened with consumption; so I wrote the whole story to my father, who had left Dublin and was settled at Apsley, near Hemel Hempstead in Hertfordshire, telling him that I must come home for change of air at once.

I went into the "parlour" to consult Mr Yates, who agreed I had better go for a while. I was not strong enough for work, and my enemies in the office were very malicious.

"And," he added, "tell your father, if there is any other opening for you he likes better, or that you wish yourself, I will give up your indentures."

I had enough money of my own to pay my journey; and on a bitterly cold morning I

mounted the roof of the London coach at the Saracen's Head, Dale Street, with a thankful heart, and was in my mother's arms on the following afternoon. How happy I need not say.

My indentures were returned by Mr Yates, after some correspondence with my father, and I had ended that phase of my life, richer in experience and general knowledge, but weak and delicate in health. With home care this soon improved.

I was not long in suspense as to my future. My father became acquainted with Mr Baxter, a Bombay merchant, who wanted a young man to assist in the house at Bombay, and proposed to me to go out at once. It had been previously decided that I should go to Madeira for my health, so the proposal fitted admirably. We dined with Mr Baxter, who lived in splendid style, and the terms offered seemed to me and to my father exceptionally good.

I was to receive a large and yearly increasing salary, live in Mr Baxter's family, and to be admitted as an eighth partner when I became of age. My mother's cousin, Mr Newnham, was holding the high office of Chief Secretary to Government at Bombay, and would no doubt look after me ; and I was considered a very lucky boy with excellent prospects.

My outfit was at once ordered, my passage taken in the Upton Castle, permission having been obtained for me to reside in India, and I returned for a few short precious days to Apsley. I will not dwell on this period; it is even yet sacred to me: but at length the 15th April came, and I parted from my dear mother in bitter grief, never to see her again. My father took me down to Greenwich in a wherry, with my boxes, and we found the Upton Castle there. We dined at the Falcon, and in the evening went on board. My father gave me much excellent advice and bid me good-bye, both he and I firmly believing that I should return in "no time," rich and prosperous, a partner in Baxter's house.

When I awoke next morning, our ship was anchored off Gravesend waiting for the captain and some of the passengers: when these arrived, we put to sea. So ended my boyhood in England. I had completed my fifteenth year the previous September.

CHAPTER II.

1824.

WE knocked about for a week in the Channel owing to strong adverse winds, and at last anchored off Spithead to wait for a fair breeze, and I wrote to my brother a long cheery letter detailing many a "castle in the air," and hope of great things to come. On the 26th April we finally put to sea. We reached Funchal, Madeira, on the 26th May. I had excellent introductions from my father's relations, Mr and Mrs Leacock, and I was very kindly received on my arrival. I saw a great deal of the island, many new sights and much wonderful scenery, which I find described in a long letter written to my mother. We were about ten days at Madeira taking in wine for India. I was on shore all the time, and I believe some of the passengers were surprised to find "the boy

for Baxter's" at dinner-parties and the chief houses of the island. Certainly, several who had not before noticed me now began to do so. The captain and chief officer taught me the use of the sextant and to make observations, and I was soon able to be of use. Some one lent me Gilchrist's Hindostanee Grammar, and taught me to pronounce the words, so I was able to make some progress.

The Upton Castle was frigate-built, and carried eighteen guns, and it was necessary to keep a good look-out against pirate cruisers about the latitude of the Azores. We were all told off to quarters, and I was constituted captain of the mizzen-top, my favourite resort for reading, and which now was garrisoned by six stout boys besides myself. One night I was keeping the first watch with Mr Duggan the second officer, when just as the lights were being put out I raised the glass, and saw a large felucca close to us on the windward quarter. I raised an alarm, and although we hailed her several times, no answer was given. I think I hear now Mr Duggan's order to me to "fire," and see the long dark ship, with all its moving dusky forms, plunging past us. I fired two muskets in rapid succession; but the stranger did not turn, and we sent a

parting shot after her. Our ship was in a state of wild excitement, and groups of passengers, ladies and gentlemen in every variety of costume, were gathered on deck. We had no further alarms after this. We were becalmed on the line for nearly three weeks, dull and insufferably hot. We welcomed Neptune and Mrs Neptune on board in the approved old fashion, and I was scraped with a hoop and well ducked, but was spared the tarring.

We had one terrible gale off the Cape, but got off without much damage. I had a narrow escape of my life, one day: I was upon the dolphin-striker and had struck two, and hit a third, and the "quiver" held; but instead of disengaging the line from my arm, it became twisted round my wrist, and had I not been lashed to the dolphin-striker I must have been inevitably dragged into the sea. The wounded fish turned in a last struggle, and I got the line free. My arm was very painful for some time, and I made no further attempts to strike dolphins.

As we neared Bombay one of the passengers took me aside, and asked me concerning my past life and future prospects very kindly. I told him all, and the arrangements which had been made for me in Baxter's house, and that I believed it

to be a great mercantile firm. On this point I was now undeceived, as my friend said Mr Baxter's was simply a large shop; that they had been in a fair way of business, but that Mr Baxter's extravagance in London had been such that it was possible the firm might no longer even exist. However, he added, you have made many friends among us; we are all interested in you, and will help you if we can. I told him of my letters to Mr Newnham and others, and he said it was impossible to have a better or more influential friend. "I think," he said, "you will not be long at Baxter's, and we shall soon see you take your proper place in society." Among the ladies, especially, I had excited an interest by rescuing one of them, a lovely girl, from a watery grave. She had incautiously opened her port-hole during a storm, keeping the cabin-door shut. A great green sea poured in, flooding the whole place. I fortunately heard the rush of water, and forcing open the door of her cabin, found her lying face downwards in the water, which was pouring over the steerage deck. I carried her to the cabin of another lady and put her in, and next day was very sweetly thanked for my services.

All things considered, my voyage had been a very pleasant one. We anchored in Bombay

harbour on the night of the 1st of September 1824, having been four months and a half at sea, and the whole of that glorious panorama opened on my sight as I rose early in the morning to have “a look at India.”

I find a long letter written to my mother, dated September 3, part of which I am tempted to insert as my first impressions of Bombay:—

“BOMBAY, *September 3, 1824.*

“MY DEAREST MOTHER,—After a long but fine passage of four months and some days, I have arrived at the house of Mr Osborne, with whom I have every expectation of being extremely comfortable; but having been only here a day, I can hardly judge how I shall like the business that I am about to embark in, in the town of Bombay.

“I have arrived at a very good time of the year, as the weather, with the exception of next month, which is a hot one, will get cooler and cooler every day. Even now the evenings and mornings, which is the only time you can stir out, except in a palankeen, are delightfully cool and pleasant.

“But one of the greatest annoyances here are the mosquitoes, which bite terribly; but as yet I have escaped their torments.

“At about half-past ten on the morning of the 1st, land was descried from the mast-head, which proved to be the high land outside Bombay harbour.

“I was employed below, packing up all my goods and chattels, so that I did not come on deck till about three in the afternoon, when by that time we were close to it. It is fine high land, and is covered with green in many places—a welcome sight for us who had been so long at sea. We passed, also, two very pretty small islands, called Hennery and Kennery, all covered with trees to the water’s edge; but as it was by this time six o’clock, we could not see the beautiful verdure of the trees; and as we entered the harbour by night, we missed a very fine sight, as the entrance to the harbour is reckoned one of the finest in the world. At half-past twelve we cast anchor in Bombay roads, about three miles from the town, intending to drop down early in the morning. Accordingly, when the pilot came on board about four o’clock, we weighed, and dropped down opposite the town, where we cast anchor for good about a mile from the shore. As soon as we had come to an anchor, we were surrounded by boats filled with black fellows, naked excepting a piece of cotton-stuff tied round their

waist, offering fruit, eggs, milk, &c., of which you may be sure we all ate very heartily by way of a treat. About twelve o'clock I hired a boat and went ashore, taking with me all the clean clothes I had, which had dwindled to about half-a-dozen clean shirts, as many stockings, and one pair of trousers—rather a slender stock! The moment I got ashore, I hired a palankeen and went to Baxter Bros., where I was received by Mr Osborne, the manager, who did not know of my appointment, but was very kind. He offered me his palankeen to go about in, and recommended me to deliver my letters; and I set out for Mr Newnham's, who was very kind, offered me his advice whenever I stood in need, and told me if he could do me any service, he would with the greatest pleasure. I then went to Mr Wodehouse, who asked me if I was entirely engaged to Baxter's; and when I told him I believed I was, I thought he looked disappointed.

“ . . . Nothing goes down here but the ‘Company,’ and it is indeed an excellent service. There are the writers, for instance; as soon as they arrive in India, they have their three hundred rupees a-month, and nothing to do but to learn the Hindostanee and Persian languages, and ride about in palankeens, with a score of black fellows

at their heels. In this country there are lots of servants, and they are the laziest lot of rascals under the sun. One fellow will not do two things. If you have a fellow to brush your shoes, he will not go on an errand. One of our passengers hired eighteen servants the moment he landed ! But their wages are very cheap. You get these fellows for 2, 3, 4, and 6 rupees a-month, and have not to clothe them or anything. . . . A shirt here lasts only a day—sometimes not even that. Fortunately washing is very cheap, only three rupees a-month, and you may dirty as many things as you like. I think the climate will agree with me ; I do not find the heat oppressive. . . . Last night I had a walk on the esplanade, which was crowded with vehicles, carriages, gigs, and buggies, of all sorts, shapes, and sizes. Bombay is a fort ; but the fortifications are not in good order. It is a pleasant walk round the top of the ramparts. I have not seen any of the passengers since I came ashore. I suppose they will all be too proud to speak to me now ; but, fortunately, there was not one I cared twopence for, except young Shepheard ; that's a comfort. . . . The language is not difficult to get a knowledge of ; but to be a good grammatical scholar is difficult, as it is not a written language. But

Gilchrist, of London, has invented a way of writing it in English letters. The natives transact their business in Persian, which is a written language. This is a festival day, and the natives walk in a sort of procession, with a kind of drum, making a terrible noise. They dress up in the most ridiculous manner, carry torches in their hands, and go on with all sorts of antics. . . . I have written you a long letter, and told you all I could think of. I shall be in daily expectation of hearing from you, and can assure you there is nothing so disappointing as a ship from England without a letter from yourself.—I am your affectionate son,

M. T.

“*P.S.*—Pray give my love to all friends at home and in London, where, I daresay, they have not forgotten me. Also to all dear friends in Dublin. When you see the boys, kiss them for me, and tell them the black fellows are such queer ‘jummies,’ with large bracelets on their arms and thighs made of silver, and rings through their noses, and strings of beads round their necks, and almost naked.

“Kiss dear Johnny for me a hundred times. I daresay he still remembers me; and give my love to Bella.

“We are going to have a new Governor, as Mr

Elphinstone is going to Madras, and a Mr Lushington of the Treasury is coming out to succeed him. The present Governor is very much liked, and the inhabitants will be sorry to part with him.

“Mr Osborne lives in a very pleasant part of the town, fronting the esplanade, close to the fort-walls. We can see the sea—in fact it is close by—so that we have the sea-breeze all day long, without which it would be miserably hot. The houses are all built very large—large rooms, &c.; and the staircases are wide and airy.

“And now, dearest mother, I must close this letter, wishing you health and happiness; and that God may send His blessing upon you and my dear father is the constant prayer of your affectionate son.”

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I had a comfortable room at Mr Osborne's, and lived with him and his wife. He was in much perplexity about me, as he continued to receive no instructions, and the affairs of the house grew worse and worse. I could be given no salary, and as to the eighth share which I was to receive after five years, Mr Osborne considered it purely imaginary, and his hope seemed to be that Mr Newnham or Mr Wodehouse would provide for

me and relieve him of the responsibility. I did not write home any complaints or misgivings, but set to work to give what I could in return for the food, shelter, and indeed clothing that Mr Osborne kindly supplied me with. I could do but little in the office, or help in accounts I did not understand at first. I could, however, make out bills for goods supplied—wine, beer, and groceries; could draft copies of outstanding accounts, and letters for Mr Osborne to sign. I had to sell in the shop both to ladies and gentlemen. I even one day sold some articles to the young lady I had rescued on board, and she presented me to her father, Colonel ——, with a pretty little speech, telling him the story; and the old gentleman shook me warmly by the hand and thanked me.

I often breakfasted with Mr Newnham, but Mr Wodehouse seemed almost more anxious on my account, and often looked into the shop. So I plodded on, Mr Osborne looking anxiously for letters about me that never came, and vexing himself by vain regrets.

My time of deliverance was not far distant. Mr Newnham one morning sent his palankeen for me, with a note saying he had something to tell me, and he showed me a letter from Sir

Charles Metcalf, then Resident at Hyderabad, stating that he had procured me a commission in his Highness the Nizam's army, and the sooner I went up to Aurungabad the better. I was of course astonished at this, but without any hesitation I accepted it at once, feeling very sure I had found a better opening than before. Only, how to get free of Baxter's? Mr Newnham wrote to Mr Osborne asking that my indentures might be cancelled. Of course Mr Osborne was surprised, but very kindly said he would not stand in my way; that I was a fortunate fellow to have such a friend and get such an appointment, and next day gave me back my indentures.

I find in a letter from Mr Newnham to my mother that "he is happy to tell her, her son will now quit the shop and move in his proper sphere. The Nizam's service," he continues, "holds out the most flattering prospects; and if he qualifies himself in points of duty and in acquaintance with the native languages, the road to high and lucrative employment will be open to him. He will remove to my house, where he will remain till he is ready to proceed to Aurungabad, where his military service will commence. I shall be very happy if this change in his circumstances should prove agreeable to you and Mr Taylor."

He is a fine intelligent lad, and I saw him, with regret, articulated to a house which is not in as flourishing a state as you were led to believe.—
Yours very faithfully,

“WILLIAM NEWNHAM.”

I removed to a small bungalow within Mr Newnham's “compound,” and a Parsee servant was appointed to attend me, who spoke good English; but I had not been idle, and could make myself understood pretty well, my ear guiding me to a good pronunciation. Arrangements for my military outfit proceeded. I needed of course uniform, tents, clothes, &c., and my generous friend, Mr Newnham, gave me a splendid chestnut Arab, which had belonged to his late wife. How pleased he was that I was out of “that shop”—that I was no longer “Baxter's boy”! indeed I am sure he felt his own dignity insulted as long as I was there. “Now,” he said, “you are Lieutenant Meadows Taylor of his Highness the Nizam's service, and we all drink your health and wish you success.”

One other temptation assailed me. Mr Shotton, the head of the great mercantile firm of that name, pressed me to throw aside military service and join his House. The prospects were very

tempting, and Mr Newnham was greatly troubled as to what was best for me to do. Finally it was arranged that Mr Newnham and Mr Wodehouse should decide; and their fiat went forth that I was to be a soldier. They were right; the great House perished too, and I should have been again on the world.

So when my kit was ready I left Bombay. Mr Newnham had generously advanced every rupee of my outfit, and I was to repay him as I could; and on the 18th November 1824 I started for Aurungabad.

CHAPTER III.

1825-29.

WHAT was I to see in the new strange world now opening before me? What was I to do and to be? My heart was full of hope, and my ambitions ran high that morning as I parted from my kind friend Mr Newnham, whose last words rang in my ears—"As soon as you have proved that you *can* be useful, you will be *made* useful," he said; "be diligent and be steady, and I have no fear for you. Now go." My things had been sent on in advance, and what little I had with me was already in the boat at the Apollo Bunder, in charge of Dorabjee, my Parsee servant. We pushed off as I entered the boat, and dashed away over the clear water. The harbour was gay with shipping, and the giant Ghâts in the background were wreathed with fleecy white clouds about their summits. I was in wild

spirits, and could scarcely restrain myself, it was so glorious and so beautiful.

I found my horse and pony, tents and baggage, at Panwell, where I landed, and in the evening went on to Chowke. There I had the first sight of a splendid Indian encampment; the Resident at Nagpore, Sir Richard Jenkins, being on his way to Bombay. The scene was very strange to me. The stately white tents, the camels depositing their burthens, the huge elephants, the native gentlemen arriving in palankeens, surrounded by their numberless attendants, the camp bazaar, with its booths and stalls, the variety of dresses, colours, and equipments—all formed a scene of Eastern splendour such as I could never have imagined.

As I was strolling idly along, I was accosted by an officer, and we fell into friendly chat; and when he knew where I was going, and who I was, he invited me to breakfast, assuring me that any friend of Mr Newnham's would be welcome to Sir Richard.

I was kindly received by the Resident, and again invited to dinner in the evening, and I felt no small gratification at such kind notice being bestowed on me.

Next morning I reached the foot of the Ghâts,

and proceeded by the military road. • How grand it was! Deep glens and ravines, bounded by tremendous precipices; trees and flowers all new to me; and fresh invigorating air, so cold and bracing, and so like, I thought, to dear old England!

On the 24th November I arrived at Poona, and was hospitably entertained by the officers of H.M. 67th Regiment at their mess. I was shown all the sights during our evening rides, and the temple where the “Peshwah” sat in state to see the English annihilated by his army, which, instead, was defeated at Kirkee, in 1817,—and many other scenes of interest; but I knew little then of Dekhan history.

We reached Ahmednugger on the 29th, and were hospitably entertained by Mr Seton, Assistant Commissioner. I spent a most interesting day there, and finally arrived at Aurungabad on the 5th December.

The last marches had been through dull dreary country, endless stony plains, with scarcely a tree to break the monotony. But as I approached Aurungabad, I saw the beautiful dome and minarets of the tomb of Aurungzeeb’s daughter glistening in the sun, and troops at drill in the parade-ground. My tent was pitched near the mess-house; but Dr Young came forward to meet

me, and hospitably insisted that I should be his guest till I had a house of my own. I reported myself to the officer in command after breakfast, was put in orders, and directed to attend drill.

A few days later, it was arranged that I should live with Lieutenant John Stirling, who had recently joined the 6th Regiment from the Bombay army, and who had a house much too large for him. He was a noble fellow, both in person and disposition, and his untimely death ended, too soon, a friendship to which I look back as one of my greatest pleasures.

I was not long in learning my drill, and was put in charge of the two centre companies, was shown how to keep the books and pay accounts, which soon became very easy to me. The adjutant took great pains with me; and I engaged a Moonshee or native teacher, and began Hindostanee in earnest.

I witnessed a curious spectacle at Aurungabad, in the shape of a miracle-play, which was annually performed under the auspices of one Major Freeman, who commanded the invalid battalion at Aurungabad. During the early Mussulman period, the kings of Beejapoor had received and endowed many Portuguese Christian missions, and one had been located at Aurungabad, where delicious

oranges and purple and white grapes still attest the fact of its former presence. A miracle-play of the life of our Lord was performed there by them, beginning with the scene of His birth, and ending with the Crucifixion. Although, no doubt, it could not bear comparison with that of Ammergau, yet it was very curious and strange. Portuguese monks chanted the story in their own tongue, interspersed with bad Hindostanee, but the effect was very impressive ; and the last scene, a real man hanging to the cross, was the signal for wailing and groaning from the spectators, who looked on with awe and wonder.

The ceremony may have died out with its patron and supporter, Major Freeman, but when I saw it the spectacle was complete. This Major Freeman was a strange character. When his wife was very ill, a religious friend offered to read and pray beside her, but he declined, saying, in his broken English, " My dears friends, I do not want yous. I'se got Catholic priests, they prays for my wife ; Brahmins makes *jâps* * for my wife ; Gosains sits in de water for my wife ; Mussulmans fakeers makes prayers for my wife ; I prays myself for my wife. Little of alls is best, dear friend. Now you goes away, if you please."

* Incantations.

I must apologise for the above digression, and continue my story.

We were often out shooting and coursing, and one day heard of a noble boar at a village some twelve miles off. We determined to slay him without delay; and sure enough I soon saw the great grey brute emerge from behind a bush, and Stirling and I dashed after him. My horse, however, struck his chest against the opposite bank in attempting to clear a small water-course, and both he and I were a good deal bruised. But I followed Stirling as soon as I could, and met him on foot covered with blood. "The beast has upset me and my horse," he said; "go and kill him." I rode on some little way, and encountered the hog with Stirling's spear sticking through him behind the ear. My own spear had been broken in my fall, and was useless, and I sent for another. Meantime the brute took to a sugar-cane field, and could not be dislodged, charging all who ventured near him; and at last, when one poor fellow had been badly wounded, I thought it better to send for my gun, and I fired exactly between the two fierce red eyes that I saw glaring at me a few yards off, and the huge beast rolled over dead. What a reception I had! I shall never forget it. Stirling abused me

soundly for spoiling the fame of the affair by shooting the hog, and it was quite in vain that I protested that no amount of "buksheesh" would induce the beaters to go near the sugar-cane. At last he was pacified, and we set off home again. My friend's wound was a bad one, and we had it properly dressed. The boar arrived soon afterwards, slung on two poles, and the whole station, ladies and all, came out to see it. I killed many a hog afterwards, but never one so large.

These were jolly days—plenty of hunting and coursing, and association with many bright, noble hearts now gone to their last long home. Erskine, Harris, Seton, James Outram, and others whom I proudly called my friends, were among that goodly-spirited company. Who of them are left now?

This is no place to detail hunting exploits or tales of hard riding; but I am sure my association with these bold, true sportsmen gave a manlier, hardier tone to my mind, and was of great service to me.

I suppose I acquitted myself well as a soldier, for I was chosen for detachment duty in the rainy season of 1825, and ordered to Kanhur, with 200 men, to support a detachment of the

Company's 23d Regiment, then acting against the Bheels, who were in rebellion. I do not remember that we caught any of the rebels, although we followed them into their fastnesses ; but instead, I caught very severe jungle fever, which nearly put an end to me. I partially recovered, but had a relapse on my return to Aurungabad, and barely escaped with my life. I was allowed four months' leave, and my kind friend Mr Newnham wished me to come to him. I was put into a palankeen, but was so ill at Ahmednugger that I was given over. At Poona I was again despaired of ; but I reached Bombay at length, and the pure sea air and Mr Newnham's kind nursing soon restored me, and I regained my strength rapidly. My financial affairs were by no means satisfactory. No pay had been given by the Nizam's Government for the last six months, and there was no such thing as getting it. I had been obliged to borrow very considerably ; and it was a weary business perpetually borrowing at from 24 to 35 per cent when my pay would have covered all expenses had I been able to get it. I explained all this to Mr Newnham, and also the rumours current that the East India Company were bent upon doing away with the Nizam's force altogether. He had heard the same, but bid me not despair.

He thought things would improve, and there was always "Shotton's House," then flourishing, to fall back upon.

I remained with Mr Newnham for three months, and then returned well and strong to Aurungabad. I found letters from home awaiting me. I do not think my father liked my change of profession much. He thought we had decided hastily ; and there was also a very curious letter from my grandfather, who had a remarkable dislike to a military career. "He could only protest," he wrote, "that it was against the laws of God that men should deliberately slay their fellow-men ; and what would my feelings be if I had to kill a man (though he might be a black one) with my own hand ?" and much more to the same effect. My dear mother, however, encouraged me to persevere diligently in the career I had adopted, and her counsels had most weight with me, and her words went straight to my heart.

Major Sayer had succeeded to the command of the Aurungabad Division, and proved a very valuable friend to me. He assisted me in my Persian and Hindostanee studies, and told me to bring him my translations occasionally to look over. What could be kinder ! I was a stranger to him, and had no introduction ; but he interested

himself about me, and encouraged me to work on. With his help I soon made considerable progress. There were no formal examinations in those days; but as a test of efficiency, I was directed to superintend regimental courts-martial, and record the evidence in English, and the finding of the court. In these I took my turn with Lieutenant Johnston, the adjutant, and as a reward the command of the Light Company was bestowed upon me for "good conduct."

With the exception of one month's leave, which I spent out tiger-shooting with a friend, I was very busy at home. I enjoyed my month's sport very much. We slew several tigers, and an occasional hog-hunt was not wanting. Small game, too, abounded—partridges and quail, peafowl and hares—and our bags were often heavy. One accomplishment I began to practise at this time. My friend was an artist, and took beautiful sketches from nature. He encouraged me to try also, and from this period dates one of the greatest pleasures of my life. He taught me as far as he could. I have the original sketches of that time—very minute, and highly finished with a fine pen—the buildings rather on the incline, and the style stiff and formal; but everything has a beginning. When my leave expired I

returned to Aurungabad, and began a course of reading with Colonel Sayer, which was of great use to me. Better times came—my pay was more regular, and the debt to Mr Newnham was almost paid off. I was very comfortable—had a good house and pleasant garden, plenty of friends, and a hopeful spirit.

About the middle of the year I was appointed interpreter to a general court-martial on a native officer of artillery—the highest linguistic test that could be applied to me in those days. I had some misgivings as to the result, but I ultimately performed my task so much to the satisfaction of the officer who had conducted the trial, that he wrote a special letter on the subject, commending my usefulness to him in “this protracted and difficult investigation.” “Now you are fit for any staff duty,” said the colonel, “and I hope you won’t be long without it”—a wish I devoutly echoed.

My Light Company was a fine one—mostly picked men from Oudh and Behar, handsome and athletic. I worked hard, and my men seconded me well, and the result was to me very satisfactory. We were reviewed, and I received the following flattering compliment from the officer in command: “I beg,” he said to our

colonel, "you will convey to the officer in charge of your Light Company my very best thanks, and tell him his performance this morning has been of the highest credit to him. I have noticed, with particular satisfaction, his unwearied exertions during the whole of the morning; and the appearance of the men under his command, and their steady conduct, bear testimony to his zeal as an officer." This to me! and before every one too! Need I say how full my heart was?

About this time Mr Martin, now Resident at Hyderabad, who also, *ex officio*, commanded the whole army, issued an order, "that he was about to start on a tour of inspection, and with a view to rewarding merit wherever it should be found, he should advance such officers as were specially brought to his notice, and as a proof thereof, had selected Lieutenant Hampton from the whole army to the honorary post of commander of his escort," &c. Now Hampton was only a local officer like myself, and I, like many others, began to speculate on the possibilities of good things in store.

Meanwhile I was very busy. Colonel Sayer had wished me to acquire some knowledge of military surveying and fortification, and I had made a survey of the cantonment with only a compass, a chain and cross-staff, and a perambula-

tor. I should have done my work better with a sextant; but there was not one to be had. However, as it was, I received thanks for my report when it reached the Residency at Hyderabad, and I was much gratified.

At last the Resident arrived with a brilliant staff; the station was very gay, and I was presented with all the other officers. Hampton had been promoted, and therefore the command of the escort was vacant. The Resident's camp was to move on next morning. After dinner Colonel Sayer took me up to Mr Martin, saying, "Allow me, sir, specially to introduce my young friend here, of whom I have had already occasion to report favourably, officially; I beg you to keep him in mind." "Will you take the command of my escort by way of a beginning?" said the Resident. "I shall be happy to have you on my personal staff if you are sufficiently acquainted with the native language." This the good colonel answered for, and I was told to prepare without further delay. I don't know how I got away: I only remember trying to keep down a big lump that rose in my throat, and the colonel saying to me, "Now you've got a start—you will never disappoint me, I know."

All the ladies and gentlemen of the station

were present, and crowded round me with congratulations; one of my friends came back with me to my house; my things were packed; we sent to the city for camels for my tents and baggage, which were despatched as quickly as possible. The night passed—I do not think I slept—and by dawn I was in my saddle, and joined the officers of the Resident's staff as they were starting on their morning stage. It was a sudden change in my life: what might be the next?

The Resident expressed himself much pleased when I presented myself at breakfast when the camp halted at a short stage from Aurungabad. We had killed two foxes by the way, my dogs having been posted beforehand. "So you can ride," said one of my new companions. I was then 9 stone 8 lb., and well mounted, as I had my chestnut, and a splendid bay hunter which Stirling had given to me. Yes; I could ride.

After breakfast Mr Martin sent for me, and asked me about my family and what I could do. He then set me to converse with his Moonshee, which I found very easy. I had learned to speak Hindostanee like a gentleman; and here let me impress upon all beginners the great advantage it is to learn to speak in a gentlemanly fashion. It may be a little more difficult to

acquire the idioms; but it is well worth while. There are modes of address suitable to all ranks and classes, and often our people unintentionally insult a native gentleman by speaking to him as they would to their servants, through ignorance of the proper form of address.

I was also examined in Persian, and Mr Martin complimented me on my diligence. The march was delightful, and the sport plentiful; small game abounded, and we had an occasional stalk after antelope—sometimes, too, a tiger was reported. The Resident always gave me some work to do, and the days flew by very pleasantly. We halted at Mominabad, a large cavalry station, where there were brilliant reviews, and *levées* of native officers, and much feasting. My dear friend Stirling had been promoted to the civil department, and was Superintendent of a large district to the south; but the day after we reached Mominabad, the Resident received an express stating that Stirling had been killed in a fight with some Arabs who had gained possession of the town of Dundooty; that Major Sutherland was about to march there with his whole force, and if the Resident had any instructions to give, they were to be sent to meet him at Owsa. I was inexpressibly shocked at this sad

occurrence: not only had Stirling been very dear to me as a friend, but he was in all respects a *preux chevalier*, whom it had been my wish to imitate. On consulting the map I found Owsa was not more than thirty-five miles distant, and that I could ride on there and join the force. I went to Mr Martin and entreated permission to go; and I prevailed. Before leaving him, he said very kindly, "I find you quite qualified for civil employ, and shall therefore nominate you to succeed your friend; but the appointment must be confirmed by the Supreme Government, so you had better come to me at Hyderabad straight from Dundooty."

I was fairly astonished. The department into which I was to be transferred was the height of my ambition; the pay was 1500 rupees a-month! How I thanked Mr Martin, or how I got away, I know not; and between my sorrow for my friend and my own unexpected stroke of fortune, my head was in a whirl. I left the camp that afternoon with two troopers as escort, but the road was unfamiliar, and we were often misled, and it was not till early morning that we reached the cavalry camp as the bugles were sounding to "boot and saddle." We were just in time to join the forces and ride on with them another

twenty *coss*, or forty miles. Of course Major Sutherland was surprised to see me, but the letters I had with me explained everything; and after a cup of coffee we rode on. We had a good rest at the end of the stage, and then proceeded to Gulburgah, another twenty miles, whence, after resting, we were to go on to Dundooty, eighteen miles further. It had been arranged that the Arabs in possession of the fort were to be at once summoned to lay down their arms and submit unconditionally; if they refused, the place was to be stormed at daylight next morning. To me was allotted one division of the stormers with their native officers, and all preliminaries were arranged. I think few of the Arabs would have been left had the attack been made, as Stirling was very popular and all were anxious to avenge his death; but as we approached the town we heard the beat of the Arab drum and saw the enemy moving off with their colours flying, by the Hyderabad road. The Commissioner had given permission to the Arabs to depart in peace, and thus they escaped our vengeance.

I had not felt tired, and even came in first in a race proposed by one of the officers. As I slid from my horse, however, I felt very stiff, and sitting on the ground, found I had no power to rise.

The surgeon declared my condition to be caused by temporary paralysis of the spine consequent on my long ride of 113 miles, and I did not recover at all till the afternoon of the next day, when a painful tingling sensation set in in my legs and back, and I soon was able to sit up. It was very clear if we had had anything to do, I should have been unable to join in it.

After-investigation proved that my poor friend Stirling had met his death by his own rashness, in proceeding alone to force the gate of the town with only twelve men against more than a hundred Arabs. As soon as the gate was opened, he fell dead, riddled by four balls which pierced his chest. In a few days the inquiry ended, and there being nothing to detain me, I was to proceed to Hyderabad. The evening before, Major Sutherland came to me as I was sitting on the grass near poor Stirling's grave, and said, "I know you have been appointed by the Resident to succeed Stirling, and that you are only awaiting the confirmation of your appointment by the Supreme Government. Now this is very creditable to you ; but I have considered the matter very deeply, and I do not think it likely that your appointment will be confirmed. Mr Martin's patronage in the civil department will

be curtailed considerably; and what I propose to you is this—do not go to Hyderabad. I want an adjutant here for one of the regiments. I will appoint you, pending your final transfer to the cavalry. You ride well, our men like you, and the pay is very good.”

It was a tempting proposal. My first wish had been to join the cavalry, and yet, when the offer was made, could I give up the chance of the coveted civil employ and the splendid opening it afforded me? Nor could I find out that my kind friend was sure of his nomination being confirmed either. How, too, could I disappoint the Resident? or how encounter the heavy expenses of a rich cavalry uniform with equipment and chargers? All this flashed through my mind in a moment, and I was not long in making my decision. I could only thank Major Sutherland, and say that “if I did not succeed in obtaining the civil appointment, I would request Mr Martin to put me into the cavalry.”

“It will be too late then, Taylor,” he said, smiling; “the Military Secretary will fill up the appointment at once, and I wanted you.”

“I cannot give up,” I replied, “what may be already settled for aught I know.”

“Be it so,” he answered, “I can say no more.”

Then he, his brother, and I discussed the matter in all its bearings, and they thought I was right in adhering to my resolve.

So next morning I started; but at a place called Purgy I was taken ill, and but for the kindness of the native Talookdar, Nawab Futteh Jah Khan, who sent his physician to me and nursed me tenderly, it would have gone hard with me. At last he sent his own palankeen, with orders that I was to be brought to his house for change of air. In vain I pleaded weakness and want of time. He would take no denial, and I went. This was my first introduction to the house of a native gentleman. "You are to be one of the family," said my host; "you are only a boy, and the ladies will not mind you. My wife will look after you, and the children shall play with you, and I will send on your letters to Hyderabad."

I stayed with these good people for a week, and was entertained most hospitably, and on leaving, presented my host with my old gun, to which he took a great fancy. He gave me a valuable sword and embroidered sword-belt, while his good lady begged my acceptance of a beautiful patchwork quilt and the bed I had slept in, which had very elaborately painted and gilt feet. I used these as long as they lasted.

When I arrived at Hyderabad Mr Martin sent for me. My appointment had not been confirmed, and he was very sore about it ; I told him then what Major Sutherland had offered me. “ Ah,” said he, “ bad luck pursues you : thinking you were surely provided for, I gave the cavalry adjutaney away where, indeed, it was already promised. You must not leave me though ; if you will join my household I will have you returned ‘ on special duty,’ till something offers worth giving you.” Yes,—it was a great fall of all my castles in the air ; I was not to be a civil superintendent, I was not to be an adjutant of cavalry, and I had nothing to do but to wait on, I hope patiently.

Mr Martin was very kind to me. I did what I could to help him in return, and found his splendid library an inexhaustible treasure-field.

The State of Hyderabad in itself is by far the largest and most important Mussulman dominion in India. The city is walled all round, and cannot, therefore, be enlarged, but the adjacent suburbs increase rapidly, and the population cannot now be less than 350,000 souls. I enjoyed my early rides, free from parade and other morning duties, and came upon many a picturesque scene, especially along the river, with the city walls and bastions on the one hand, and the

native houses of the Begum Bazaar, with their fine trees, on the other. The river-bed, too, is always a stirring sight, with its countless groups of people bathing, washing clothes, or carrying away water from holes scooped in the sand; elephants being washed or scrubbed with sand by their keepers, and evidently enjoying the operation. These, and many other objects, formed glowing pictures of colour and native costume of endless variety. The scenery, too, is very striking. From one favourite point of view of mine, the city lies stretched before you, the graceful "Char Minar" or gate of the "Four Minarets" in its centre; the gigantic "Mecca mosque" standing out nobly; while the large tank of "Meer Allum" lies at your feet, and the bold rock of the Fort of Golcondah rises in the distance. From hence, a rising sun gradually lighting up every object in the clear morning air, and the glowing glittering landscape terminating in the tender blue of the distance, is inexpressibly beautiful. There is also a favourite place of resort of an evening for Mussulman gentlemen of the city on a knoll to the right of the Masulipatam road; and I was often asked to sit down with them while their carpets were spread, and their attendants brought hookahs. Even thus early in my life, I began associating with native

gentlemen, and observing their manners and customs, modes of speech and conversation. The glorious view, the air filled with golden light, the gorgeous sunsets, the mellowness which softened every object, made, I think, the evening even more beautiful than the morning. I loved to go there quietly and dream dreams. I was growing out of boyhood, and that 'period is always a momentous one to every man. I was sensitive and shy, and no doubt romantic. Mr Martin was always kind, and bade me be hopeful ; but I had been sorely disappointed, and felt often sad and dejected as to my prospects. At this time I was often at the house of Mr William Palmer, where I met the most intelligent members of Hyderabad society, both native and European, and the pleasant gatherings at his most hospitable house were a great relief from the state and formality of the Residency.

I was not long destined to be idle. One day Mr Martin sent for me and told me that, under a recent arrangement in the military department, a small appointment on the general staff was at his disposal if I liked to accept it. I was delighted at the idea of having anything to do, and thanked him cordially for his kindness.

The appointment was Superintendent of Bazaars

at Bolarum, a cantonment of the Nizam's troops twelve miles north of the Residency, on higher ground, and consequently cooler and more bracing. My duties were simple enough. I had to regulate the markets and the prices of grain in conjunction with the principal merchants and grain-dealers. I was to decide all civil cases, try, and punish all breaches of the peace, and make daily reports to my superior officer at ten o'clock every morning in person. I was to inspect all meat killed, both for the use of the troops and private consumption; in fact, I was a sort of magistrate for the cantonment and its environs; and, as one of the Division Staff, had to attend the "Brigadier" at all parades and on field-days.

I was, on the whole, well pleased with my office. Of course it was monotonous. What Indian staff appointment, with a daily routine of work, is not?

I was enabled to discover and check various irregularities in the prices of grain and *ghee* or boiled butter, which had escaped my predecessor, and this made the sepoys my friends. The stores of grain were kept up at their full complement, and the force could have taken the field at an hour's notice. Every one pronounced the meat and bread better than before; and as I

had established a free market for vegetables, they were always plentiful and fresh.

Still, it was a troublesome post. Disputes often arose between masters and servants, debts by individuals, and the like ; but I believe I firmly gained the colonel's goodwill by settling a dangerous quarrel between two infantry regiments which had arisen at one of the festivals. During the inquiry that followed, over which I presided, I found an opportunity of reconciliation, of which I availed myself, and the quarrel was made up out of hand.

I did not enter much into general society at this period. High play was the chief amusement which prevailed, and I never was at that time or at any time fond of cards, or did I ever play for money, except for the veriest trifle.

I worked on as well as I could, taking care not to neglect my Persian studies, and occasionally reading with a Moonshee or native teacher, and looked forward hopefully to the time when, by some possibility, I might gain an entrance into the Civil Service. The day came at length. An officer, who was Assistant Superintendent of Police in the S.W. district of the country, got tired of his solitary life, and proposed to exchange with me. Mr Martin at once consented to the

step, and wrote to me very kindly on the subject, expressing his desire to serve me to the utmost of his power, and recommending me to accept the exchange.

My arrangements were soon complete. I was to become proprietor of Captain L.'s bungalow at Sudasheopett, with one or two tents; he, of my "buggy" and horse, which I no longer needed. Furniture on both sides was valued; and when we were respectively in "orders," I betook myself to my new duties, of which the Resident and his secretary gave me an outline; but nothing very precise could be laid down respecting them, and I was left very much to exercise my own judgment.

I left Bolarum with many expressions of kind regret from the colonel, who thanked me for my services, and declared himself well satisfied with me on all points, offering me a testimonial of good conduct and ability in case of my requiring one at any time.

Now at last I was free!—literally my own master. I had an immense tract of country to overlook, of which I knew nothing, except that in going to Dundooty I had crossed part of it. I took leave of the Resident and of the Nizam's Minister, Chundoo Lall, who were both very kind to

me ; but of all the counsel and direction I received, I owe most of what was useful to me afterwards to Mr Palmer, and he offered to assist me by letter if I were in need of help. His grand-looking old mother, the Begum Sahib, blessed me, and tied a rupee in a silk handkerchief round my arm, praying the saints to have me in their holy keeping ; and I started on my journey, accompanied by my escort of police, and reached Sudasheopett on the fourth day. I had not completed my eighteenth year.

The northern boundary of my district may have been 250 miles in length, extending from Hyderabad to Puraindah, with stations at various intervals, of which Tooljapoor was one of the most important. Its general southern boundary was the Bheema river, to its junction with the Krishna, and its greatest breadth was from 50 to 60 miles, narrowing at either end. In all it may have included from ten to twelve thousand square miles, and its population must have exceeded one million souls.

My duties in the Revenue Department were not to begin till the Superintendent made his tour through the district after the monsoon. My police duties were very clear. There were stations as nearly as possible every forty miles, where

twelve mounted and ten foot police were posted ; and these went periodical patrols from their own station to the next, returning every fortnight.

Foot police were stationed in villages averaging three miles asunder, and patrolled their beat every day. If anything occurred it was reported to the jemadar, and by him to me, if important ; otherwise, it was entered in the diary, which was transmitted to me weekly.

I had altogether 50 mounted and 150 foot police under my command. The road was an important one—the highroad to Bombay—and the patrols had had the effect of keeping off gangs of highway robbers and *dacoits*,* which before the establishment of the force had become very bold and dangerous.

My predecessor had been enjoined to take active measures for the suppression of these pests, but, so far as I could ascertain, had really done nothing.

I assembled all my jemadars and native officers, and endeavoured to find out their views of what was most feasible to be done ; but I found most of them were men from a distance, and possessed little, if any, local knowledge.

A district lay between the tract of land over which I had jurisdiction, and the river Mangera

* *Dacoity*, robbery with violence.

to the north, and it soon became plain to me that unless I had command over this as well, I could do very little to check the depredations of the dacoits, who had, as was evident from the records, become the terror of this part of the country. I therefore applied for, and obtained, the necessary permission, and was soon free to act in all directions needful to my purpose.

My position was a very pleasant one. My little bungalow was situated at the edge of a mangrove, which lies behind the present travellers' bungalow. It consisted of one centre room, with a division all round, forming a dressing-room, bath-room, and store-room. Without, at a little distance, were the offices and kitchen, and stabling for five horses. I could not immediately start on my tour through the district, as it was the rainy season, but I had ample occupation. I gathered all the information I could with regard to thieves and robbers. I made a large collection of birds and insects for my uncle, Mr Prideaux Selby, of Twizell House, Northumberland, who was engaged upon his great work on Ornithology. Tree birds of all kinds abounded, while the tanks or reservoirs teemed with water-fowl of seemingly endless variety.

I sent to Bombay for a Mahratta grammar, and

began the study of that language, without which I plainly saw I could not get on. Teloogoo was the language of the people about Sudasheopett, and it changed to Canarese a little distance further; but neither was a language of business. Mahratta was evidently the most useful of all.

I had plenty to do. Every morning brought in reports from my officers and men, which had to be answered and investigated. Then my early bag of birds had to be skinned and prepared; English correspondence and my Mahratta lesson followed; and I had always a box of books from the Secunderabad or Bolarum library to occupy my evenings. I kept Mr Newnham well informed of my doings, and his delight when I obtained this appointment was very sincere.

I rode in to Hyderabad towards the close of the monsoon to see Mr Martin, and I told him what I was doing, and that I was collecting all the information I could about the district. He desired me to march quietly up to a spot near the western frontier, as he might have occasion to employ me actively, but said he could not be more explicit just then. So, at the beginning of October, I joyfully betook myself to my tent-life, with a sense of freedom and of joy which I still can vividly recall.

I journeyed leisurely on. The country was open and beautiful, the various crops were being sown, the air felt dry and fresh, and the march was very enjoyable. I halted near Hominabad, and rode over to see the old city of Beeder, than which, I think, nothing could be more picturesque. Hominabad was a central point, where was concentrated all the trade in salt and spices from the western coast for Berar, receiving in return cotton, oil-seed, ginger, grain, &c. I found I could serve the merchants considerably, and one, Seth Atmaram, became my good friend; but first we had a quarrel. Some of my escort complained of short weight in their flour, and I had the persons who sold it fined; whereupon the other flour and retail grain dealers shut their shops, and went in a body to a grove, where they declared they would remain till I went away. I was certainly not to be intimidated; so I set up a bazaar of my own, which was well supplied by some Brinjaries, the old chief of whom had certificates from the Duke of Wellington for services in the Mahratta war. Provision-sellers came from other villages, and I was independent. An effort was made to induce me to send for the fugitives, but I refused; then a complaint reached the Minister at Hyderabad, Rajah Chundoo Lall,

that I had desolated the town by my violence, and extorted large sums of money from the chief merchants. Mr Martin requested an explanation from me, which I, of course, gave at once. Meantime my friends began to think they had gone too far, and brought a petition to the effect that I had been misled, and that they knew the real culprits, with whom I could deal as I pleased, &c. Mr Martin was now satisfied, and I received his commendation. The Minister sent down a special officer, who used a very lofty tone to the merchants, threatened a fine of 10,000 rupees, which I begged off; and he departed finally, with, no doubt, a very handsome private *douceur* in his pocket. When I next visited Hyderabad, old Chundoo Lall, giving me a poke in the ribs, said, grimly, "Ah, Taylor Sahib! you should have let me put the screw on those Hominabad people. You had them down so completely—and they always defied me—I might have got a lakh out of them." "And lost your good name, Maharaj," I replied. "You should bestow half a lakh on *me* for being so careful of your good name and honour!"

There were no more complaints of false weights. The Dean of Guild and Town Council were made answerable for them, and the

police had authority to inspect them from time to time.

My next halt was at Tooljapoor, which I found a most picturesque, delightful spot. I have made it the scene of my historical romance, 'Tara,' because of its beauty and of its history, when in 1657 its temple was plundered by Afzool Khan, whose subsequent murder by Sivajee is still considered by the people as but a fitting retribution. The day I arrived, a Brahmin entered my *cutcherry*, or office-tent, sat down quietly in a corner, and after remaining a while silent, rose and said—

"I hear you speak Mahratta; is it so?"

"I am only a beginner," I replied; "but I daresay I can follow you."

"I am struck with your face," he continued, "and I should like to see your hand and cast your horoscope. Do you know when you were born?"

I gave him the date, and he proceeded to examine first my forehead and then my left hand. "It is a long and happy life on the whole," he said; "but there are some crosses and some deep sorrows. You are not yet married, but you soon will be, and you will have children—not many—some of whom you will lose. You will never be

rich, nor ever poor ; and yet much, very much, money will pass through your hands. You will not now stay long here ; but after many years you will return, and rule over us. Fear nothing ; your destiny is under the planet Jupiter, and you will surely prosper."

He added further details when he brought my horoscope some hours later, one which especially struck me being that I should become a Rajah, and rule over a large tract of country to the south.

I thought the affair curious enough, and wrote out a translation of it, which I sent home ; but, to my regret, have failed to find more than allusions to it in my father's letters to me.

During that day my tent was beset by hundreds of pilgrims and travellers, crying loudly for justice against the flour-sellers, who not only gave short weight in flour, but adulterated it so distressingly with sand, that the cakes made of it were uneatable, and had to be thrown away. I sent for the civil officer of the town, who declared the flour-sellers to be incorrigible, and that the complaint was perfectly true ; so I determined to take my own course.

That evening I told some reliable men of my escort to go quietly into the bazaars, and each

buy flour at a separate shop, being careful to note whose shop it was. The flour was brought to me. I tested every sample, and found it full of sand as I passed it under my teeth. I then desired that all the persons named in my list should be sent to me, with their baskets of flour, their weights and scales. Shortly afterwards they arrived, evidently suspecting nothing, and were placed in a row, seated on the grass before my tent.

"Now," said I, gravely, "each of you are to weigh out a seer (two pounds) of your flour," which was done.

"Is it for the pilgrims?" asked one.

"No," said I, quietly, though I had much difficulty to keep my countenance. "You must eat it yourselves."

They saw that I was in earnest, and offered to pay any fine I imposed.

"Not so," I returned; "you have made many eat your flour, why should you object to eat it yourselves?"

They were horribly frightened; and, amid the jeers and screams of laughter of the bystanders, some of them actually began to eat, sputtering out the half-moistened flour, which could be heard crunching between their teeth. At last some of

them flung themselves on their faces, abjectly beseeching pardon.

“Swear,” I cried, “swear by the holy mother in yonder temple, that you will not fill the mouths of her worshippers with dirt! You have brought this on yourselves, and there is not a man in all the country who will not laugh at the *bunnias* (flour-sellers), who could not eat their own flour because it broke their teeth.”

So this episode terminated, and I heard no more complaints of bad flour.

I received notice soon after that I was to proceed to Puraindah and take charge of a squadron of cavalry, which was to meet me there, and that I was to co-operate with the civil authorities of the Bombay Presidency for the suppression of the rebellion of Oomajee Naik—this being the special service that Mr Martin had hinted to me. I marched at once, and found the squadron already there—two troops and their native officers. We were not idle. Oomajee Naik seemed to be ubiquitous, and we had many a weary, fruitless search for this noted and most mischievous brigand, whose robberies, often attended with violence, cattle-lifting, and all manner of villany, had become the terror of the country. Oomajee had a spite against all authority, hated both

priestly and secular Brahmins, and enjoyed nothing more, if he could catch one, than cutting off his nose and ears. By his own people he was considered a hero. He was hunted down at last, after many years, by an English officer, who captured him as he was bathing in the river Bheema. He led us many a dance through the country, and often we were misled on false information. I scoured the hills and plains equally in vain, and became notorious by wearing a pair of red cloth trousers, made by a native artist, having worn out my own riding trousers completely. At last Oomajee found the place was getting too hot for him, and withdrew, and we were released from our harassing work.

I paid a pleasant visit to the Collector of Sholapoor, who, I remember, was much surprised at my youthful appearance, and we discussed together the best way to repress the great crime of cattle-lifting, which had been actively carried on for years. I was amused to meet at the hospitable Collector's table some of my old ship-mates of the Upton Castle, and to witness their surprise to see "Baxter's shop-boy" transformed into a grave Political Agent for the whole of the Nizam's frontier. They all congratulated me, and showed me every possible attention dur-

ing my stay. Mr Newnham wrote me a very gratifying letter, saying he had heard me praised officially, and that he was quite satisfied with my progress.

I returned to my own quarters, and on consulting with my native friends, found I had not sufficient power to carry out my scheme of organising the police as I wished, at once; but I was advised to take one *pergunna*, or county, work that first, and then gradually extend my system. My district was much cut up by private estates, whose owners or managers defied or evaded the orders of the Nizam's executive government, and would only obey their own masters, some of whom were powerful nobles of Hyderabad, who jealously resented any interference by the executive minister, while their agents were well-known protectors of thieves and robbers, whose booty they shared. Evidently mine was no easy task, and I must make sure my footing before I could establish or carry out any measures of reform.

I had a note from the Collector of Sholapoor requesting me to meet him at a town called Bursee, which I did; killing two splendid hogs on the road, single-handed, and receiving much commendation from my friend, one of the greatest

sportsmen of the Bombay side. A complaint was made to us by one of the native officers about the executive department of the Revenue Survey, which was then proceeding: it was averred that bribes were taken and other corrupt practices carried on, and numerous documents were sent in as proof. We looked into the matter, and found not only much ground for complaint, but also that a great deal of the work was good for nothing. I had the pleasure afterwards of learning, through Mr Newnham, that I had been the means of bringing heavy frauds to light, and had done essential service.

In regard to my plan of frontier police, the Collector saw many difficulties, unless, indeed, a regular force were organised; and I had yet much to learn.

I determined, therefore, to begin at my own end of the district first, quietly feeling my way. In some places my orders had met with a hearty response, in others they were totally disregarded.

My camp was pitched at Ekhailee, when one afternoon I saw some persons carrying a native bedstead, which was put down opposite my tent: there was something lying upon it concealed by a bloody sheet; when this was withdrawn, I saw a young Brahmin literally covered with sabre-cuts.

He was very faint, but after the barber had dressed his wounds, he told his story, saying that the night before, the Rajah, as he was called, of Kurrumkote, had attacked his house, had murdered his father, uncle, and grandmother, and had then proceeded to plunder the dwelling; that the Rajah was still abroad, and purposed committing another dacoity that night at a village he named.

There was no time to lose; this at any rate might be prevented. I had ten mounted men and five available foot police, and I prepared in all haste.

The perpetrator of the outrage was a noted character, Narrayan Rao, and I had heard of him as being a very dangerous man. His village was very strong, and he had recently repaired the *garhy* or castle, with its gates and bastions, and it held a strong garrison of desperadoes. I was determined to have him if I could. My friend, Bulram Sing, knew the country well, and was our guide. We had thirty miles to march, but eventually the night's work proved far more.

It was dark as we neared the village of Cooloor, where the proposed dacoity was to take place, and leaving four men for its protection I took on the other nine, including Bulram Sing and

another jemadar of police ; I had also two grooms who rode my baggage-ponies ; and these constituted my little party.

We rode first to a town called Sooloopett, where Narrayan Rao was reported to have been seen in the bazaar ; but we were at fault, as he had left it and gone, the people said, to Cooloor ; but as there was no other road than the one by which we had just come, we knew this could not be the case. Bulram Sing fancied the Rajah must have heard of the wounded Brahmin having been brought to me, and therefore had retired to his fort ; and he was right. We all partook of some refreshment, as we were tired, and then started for Kurrumkote—the Rajah's village.

It looked very strong as we approached in the early morning ; the fort stood out in the centre with its large bastions and loopholed walls, all in excellent repair. We halted under a little grove of mango-trees, and when the gate was opened to allow the cattle to come out, we rode in boldly, and though the guard seized their matchlocks, no one attempted to fire. In reply to their questions I answered, "I have been travelling all night, and am tired, and intend to rest here a while."

"We will send word to the Rajah," said several.

"No," I answered, "I will speak to him myself;" and we rode up the main street. I thought for a moment that it was rather a rash proceeding, for on the bastions of the fort many men appeared, showing themselves on the parapet and calling to us to go back. The Rajah lived in the fort, and some men came out and stood on the steps leading up to it, and asked me what I wanted.

"The Sahib Bahadur wishes to see your Rajah Sahib," said my jemadar, "and he is tired, —he has ridden all night."

"My master is asleep," rejoined the man, "and I dare not disturb him."

"I must see him, and at once," I said; "if he does not come, I shall go in myself," and the spokesman went in, returning directly with a young fair man, who was tying a handkerchief round his head.

He saluted me, and inquired haughtily, "why I had come into his town, into which no Feringhee had ever before entered without his leave?"

I stooped down and said in his ear, "You are my prisoner, and must come quietly with me; if you or your people resist, I will drive my spear through your body. Now we will go, if you please."

The street was narrow, and as my horsemen spread themselves behind us, no one could get near us. I do not remember ever feeling so excited as I did when the Rajah and I went down to the gate by which we had entered. He said nothing; but his men were crowding on the walls and house-tops, all armed and calling to each other. Perhaps they noticed that my long hog spear was within six inches of their Rajah's back!

When we reached the gate he merely said to the guard, "Don't follow, I shall return soon;" and we all passed out safely.

"Now," said I to one of my men, "let the Sahib ride, Bhudrinath;" and as he dismounted from his mare, I bade Narrayan Rao get up.

"If you don't, you're a dead man," I said; and Bulram Sing advised him to obey; "for," said he, "if you do not do as my master orders you, he will put his spear through you."

So the Rajah mounted, and as this was seen from the gate towers not a hundred and fifty yards from us, one of my men happening to look round, called out, "They are going to fire;" and we had scarcely time to put our weary horses into a canter, when a regular volley was discharged, knocking up the dust behind us.

Bhudrinath had scrambled up behind the Rajah with a merry laugh, and kept consoling his companion by telling him the shot would hit him first. Narrayan Rao, however, maintained perfect silence, and told me afterwards he expected to have been hung upon the first tree, and supposed this to be my reason for ordering him to mount.

Now I had my prisoner, where was I to put him? My camp was forty miles distant, and I resolved at last to take him to Chinchola, where there was a fortified court-house, which could be easily defended in case of a rescue being attempted; and when we reached it the Rajah was safely located there, having been first put in irons.

The surviving relations of the murdered Brahmins came that evening, and were confronted with the Rajah, who did not attempt to deny the murders. The family were his own near relations, but they had a good deal of silver plate, which had excited his cupidity.

All that night we were kept in constant alarm. Shots were fired at our gates and bastions, and dismal and unearthly shriekings and howlings were kept up by our enemies. I was glad when morning came, and brought my servants with clean clothes and a guard of five soldiers. It

was a busy day ; people crowded in with complaints and accusations against the prisoner for exactions and dacoity. Strange to say, he admitted them all, and directed us where to find the plunder. I sent for it, and it was brought : massive silver, copper, and brass vessels, and a quantity of valuable cloths and silk. The villagers sent me eight men who had assisted at the dacoity, and their confessions enabled me to apprehend ten more.

I determined to take the wretch himself to Hyderabad. This he heard of, and sent me a private note, which ran thus :—

“ You are all powerful and merciful. Send the enclosed to Hominabad, and you can get cash or bills for 24,000 rupees. When you get this, allow me to depart.”

“ So that is your game, my friend,” I thought ; “ perhaps you may be corrupting my people.” So I ordered my bed to be taken down and placed across his door, and talked to him most of the night.

“ I was a fool,” he said, “ not to shut the gate when you were inside. My people would have killed you.”

“ It wouldn't have helped you much,” I replied ; “ your village would soon have been

knocked about your ears, and you would have been hanged. Now you are safe. Chundoo Lall will not hang a Brahmin."

"Not unless your gentlemen make him," he said, "as you do your own people when murder is done. I hated them. I only killed my uncle. He was the worst."

"And your grandmother?"

"Ah!" he said, and was silent. He then asked if I had sent for the 24,000 rupees in money or bills?

"No," I said, "English gentlemen do not take bribes. The Minister will get the money at Hyderabad."

"God forbid!" he exclaimed; "take 50,000, take a lakh. Ah, sir! for your mother's sake let me go. I cannot go to Hyderabad alive!"

It struck me he might have poison concealed about him, so I had him stripped and searched. I told him frankly, he must go to Hyderabad, for that I had no power to deal with him.

But it did not seem an easy matter to get him there. My scouts brought in word that the Rajah's people were out in great numbers on the road, and intended to dispute my passage. My escort was very weak; I had nineteen prisoners. But a happy solution occurred to my difficulties.

My men on the look-out reported that some English troops had arrived, and going up myself, I saw the flags of an English regiment being set out for an encampment. I dressed quickly and went to the officer in command, who at once ordered a native officer and twenty men to accompany the prisoners. I started early next morning, and made a long march, clearing the jungly tract in which the rescue had been planned, and which would very possibly have succeeded had my escort remained as it was. I reached Hyderabad on the third day, and was immediately summoned to the Residency, red trousers and all; told Mr Martin my story, which amused him very much, and showed him the order for the 24,000 rupees. He desired me to go on at once to the Minister, and we did, hot and travel-stained as we were. Chundoo Lall was very cordial and gracious, and his keen grey eyes twinkled when I handed him the order for the 24,000 rupees, and he laughed heartily at my account of the whole scene.

“Why did you not get the lakh, Taylor?” he said; “now it will be hidden.”

Narrayan Rao sat trembling in the corner, making frantic appeals for justice, and I took my leave as I heard the order given for “close imprisonment.”

“The Minister might have given you a present out of the money you brought,” said Mr Martin; and indeed I thought so too, especially as three of my best horses died soon after.

I received a very handsome official acknowledgment from Mr Martin for the service I had rendered, praising my “zeal and promptitude in an arduous and trying business,” and much more that was very flattering and pleasant. I left Hyderabad within a week; but, alas! my horses had been in an infected stable, and I lost all except my white pony. It was in vain that I asked for some help to replace them, although they had done valuable service, and were a loss of 3000 rupees.

I mentioned my loss when writing to Mr Newnham, and he sent me most kindly and generously a magnificent bay—a timely gift, and one I highly prized.

When I returned to my district, in company with my chief, Mr Colvin, we determined to look into the revenue settlement of the country. We stayed a few delicious days at Beeder, roaming through the grand old city, revelling in its beauty, and recalling its past histories. We could have stayed there dreaming on, but work was before us, and we pushed on to Hominabad.

I am not going to inflict details of revenue settlement on my readers. We found the Bengal system, with which Mr Colvin was familiar, would not suit the country at all, and that the best plan was to continue the former settlements, with here and there some slight alterations; and as I could do this alone, he left me. I worked at this and my registration of village police in every county and along the road, getting on as well as I could, and my old hope of having a district to myself was renewed, as Mr Colvin was dissatisfied and would not stay, and thought it likely that I might be appointed in his place.

Some very curious and difficult cases of disputed inheritance came before me. One I very well remember, in which two families claimed the same land under a grant from King Yoosuf Adil Shah, who began to reign A.D. 1480. The papers were exactly similar. No forgery could be detected either in the registries or seals; both seemed genuine, and we were fairly puzzled, till, after dinner, holding up the paper to the light, I saw an unmistakable water-mark—a figure of an angel, with “Goa” underneath. Now, Goa had only been taken by the Portuguese in A.D. 1510; therefore, there could have been no Goa paper in existence in 1488, and Indian paper has never any water-mark.

The falsification, therefore, of the deed written on Portuguese paper was conclusive.

Mr Colvin was obliged to go back to Hyderabad, as his health was suffering, and I had an immense increase of work ; but I determined to make myself acquainted with every detail, in order to fit myself to succeed him if he should leave.

Returning after an absence of a month through my district, I was met by some very startling revelations. The police, and chiefly my faithful Bulram Sing, had reported some very unusual occurrences. Dead bodies, evidently strangled, and in no instance recognised, were found by the roadside, and no clue could be discovered as to the perpetrators of their death. In two places, jackals or hyenas had rooted up newly - made graves, in one of which were found four bodies and in another two, much eaten and disfigured.

The whole country was in alarm, and the villagers had constantly patrolled their roads, but as yet in vain. All we could learn was, that some time before, two bodies of men had passed through the district, purporting to be merchants from the north going southwards, but that they appeared quiet and respectable, above suspicion. During these inquiries it transpired that numbers of persons of that part of my district were absent every

year from their homes at stated periods. These were for the most part Mussulmans, who carried on a trade with Belgaum, Darwar, and Mysore, bringing back wearing apparel, copper and brass vessels, and the like. Who could these be? Day after day I tried to sift the mystery, but could not. I registered their names, and enjoined Bulram Sing to have the parties watched on their return home. But as the monsoon opened that year with much violence, I was obliged, most reluctantly, to go back to my bungalow at Sudasheopett.

I was very anxious about this time also on another point.

Lord William Bentinck, then Governor-General, had adopted as one of his political measures the alteration of the treaties between several native States with the Honourable East India Company, which provided for the support of Contingent forces established during Lord Hastings' government. When it was known that the Nagpore force had been abolished, and all the officers of the Company's army remanded to their regiments, and the local officers discharged with gratuities of a few months' pay each, it was impossible not to feel the direst anxiety as to the fate of the Nizam's Contingent, which occupied a perfectly similar position.

It was expected that we should receive four months' pay each, and then I should be thrown again upon the world.

Had the old Nizam lived, or had he been in a condition to transact business, he might have yielded to the offers made him ; for the force was a very expensive one, costing forty lakhs or more, and it was expected the Nizam would gladly pay twenty or thirty as an escape from further liability. But his end was now approaching, and for a time we had a respite.

Mr Newnham wrote to me bidding me "come to him again and he would do his best to further my interests;" and in the event of our force being abolished I should have done so. Mr Palmer advised my remaining at Hyderabad and becoming a merchant, and promised me a rapid fortune. So waiting and speculating I kept on, often very weary and anxious.

The old Nizam, Sikunder Jah, died at the end of June 1829, and was succeeded by his eldest son, not of the highest degree of marriage ; but he was favoured by the Minister, Chundoo Lall, and was confirmed as his father's successor at Calcutta.

The first use he made of his power was, at the "durbar" which the Resident attended to con-

gratulate him on his accession, to demand roughly, "That the Feringhees, who were interfering in his country, should be recalled." Of course no immediate reply could be given, as the establishment of the civil control had been at the request of his father, who was sufficiently wise to see that the best chance of prosperity for his country was its being placed under English gentlemen.

It was the general opinion that the withdrawal of the civil officers would be the prelude to the total abolition of the Contingent. Reference was made to Calcutta, and it was decided to accede to the wishes of the Nizam. After living some months in a state of feverish anxiety as to my fate, I received orders in October to rejoin my regiment at Hyderabad, as the civil control was to be discontinued. I earnestly entreated to be allowed to remain even a short time to prosecute my inquiries respecting the mysterious murders which had been perpetrated in my district. At first the Resident listened to me incredulously as I unfolded my tale ; but he soon saw I was in earnest, and he wrote to the Minister to request permission for me to stay : but Chundoo Lall replied that the Nizam had become so impatient and imperious that he dare not sanction my con-

tinuance ; and with a very heavy heart I rejoined my regiment, the 6th, stationed at Bolarum. Had I been allowed to remain, I should have been the first to disclose the horrible crime of Thuggee to the world ; but it fell to the good fortune of Major Sleeman to do so afterwards. My inquiries were very active, and I found that parties of apparently most respectable Mussulmans occasionally passed through the district, having charms, amulets, and medicines to sell. "Our trade," said one to me, "is to take with us from Allund, old and new *sarees* and waistbands and trade with them, getting in exchange brass and copper pots, and gold or silver ornaments ; these we exchange again when the rains begin. We don't take our wives ; they and the children remain at home as hostages for the rent we owe." What could seem more plausible ; and who could conceive the horrible crimes that were concealed under so fair a semblance ?

The subject haunted me ; why should so many men follow the same calling ? Where did they go ? Were they speaking truth ? My people were at fault, and Bulram Sing shared my suspicions. He and Bhudrinath volunteered to follow and watch these men, and they were both absent disguised as fakeers when I was recalled

to my regiment, and thus the mystery remained unsolved !

All chance of civil employ was now over, but still the service was safe, as the Nizam had promptly refused to do away with the Contingent and substitute a payment of twenty lakhs, as had been suggested. He took pride in the force, and the English Government now declared that it should not be disturbed, but that its cost should be lessened by sundry reforms. The pay was made to assimilate with that of the Company's army, without any consideration of the pensions, passage-money, and other advantages of the Company's service : we " locals " were to have our bare pay only—in my case as a lieutenant it was 290 rupees a-month instead of 400. New regulations were drawn up providing promotion to the rank of captain after twelve years' service : but no pension was allowed ; and the whole was summed up by a sentence which carried despair to many a heart—

"The Nizam's Government can grant no furlough to Europe."

No more sight of home ! no future meeting with my mother ! never again to visit England, unless I left the service and returned to be a burden to my people. I can never forget the

numbness which crept over me as I thought of it, now that all pleasant anticipations were gone, and my congenial employment exchanged for the dull routine of regimental duty. My old company received me with affectionate greeting, and I made up my mind, for the present at least, to remain. I was now twenty-one.

CHAPTER IV.

1829-37.

I HAVE, perhaps, no right to intrude upon my readers the doubts and fears, crude hopes and impossible aspirations that filled my mind, as was only natural in one so young. I had met with some disappointments, bitter ones, already ; but I had courage and good health remaining, and I always look upon this period as a turning-point in my life. I was exposed to much temptation. In those days in India men drank hard and deep, and high play was the rule, not the exception. However, I cared for none of these things, and kept much aloof ; I was esteemed exclusive and unsociable, but I did not mind. I had my own recreations after my own taste ; among these my boat on the large Hoosein Saugor Tank was my chief one, and scarcely an evening passed that I did not drive over from Bolarum to have a sail.

I had rigged her myself with three sprit-sails, after the fashion of the Liverpool ferry-boats, and I fully enjoyed sailing her in company with the other tiny yachts which were always out. I studied Persian and Mahratta, and if I had been drawing all day long I could not have complied with the requests that were made to me to fill the albums of my fair friends.

Mr Martin was removed from the Residency at Hyderabad and transferred to an appointment at Delhi. He had never been popular, and his manner was cold and formal except to those he really liked. To me he had been invariably kind, and the tears stood in his eyes when I took leave of him. "I would have done more for you if I could," he said; "I feel as if you were among the few really true to me." He soon afterwards took furlough to England, and did not resume his public life.

In November 1830, Colonel Stewart, formerly Resident at Gwalior, was promoted to Hyderabad. From him and his charming family I experienced kindness and hospitality unbounded. He was generous and open-hearted, and belonged to the school of "non-interference" politicians. The Nizam expressed himself anxious to effect reform in many departments, but ended by doing very little.

At the end of the Mahratta war of 1818, the finances of the Nizam's State were in the utmost disorder, and the Government of the Nizam had no credit whatever in the money market. Had it not been for the continuous loans made to it by Messrs Wm. Palmer & Co., it must have become bankrupt in all its State obligations. The Nizam had large private hoards, but these he refused to allow his Minister to touch for any public purpose. The loan of £600,000, authorised by the Indian Government, from the house of Wm. Palmer & Co., did for a while satisfy some pressing needs; but no attempt was made to introduce economical reform, or to raise depressed revenue to the ordinary standard. Therefore, financial distress continued. Villages were deserted; large tracts left uncultivated; rebellions ensued which the Government was too weak to check; and it was when things were in this condition that Sir Charles Metcalf proposed the introduction of the superintendence of English officers into the civil departments—a measure sanctioned by the Court of Directors, and approved by the old Nizam.

The measures enforced by these officers were the settlement for five years of every village which duly received its lease. Waste lands were

let at small increasing rents, till a fair average should be attained in five or seven years ; cultivation increased rapidly ; emigrants returned ; much good was done, and much exaction prevented. The officers of the Nizam's Government made the collections, and generally managed their own districts, but no demand for extra cesses or oppression of any kind was left unnoticed. These native officers considered the check and superintendence of the English a great grievance, and appeals were entered against them ; but on the whole, the system worked harmoniously and beneficially to the people.

Now, however, that the civil control of the English was abolished, the country was thrown open to the Minister and his creatures, and the old scenes were enacted anew. The fine rich cotton-growing country of Berar suffered terribly, and many more likewise. Districts were farmed out to speculators, or money-lenders—whoever chose to make the highest advance ; and it was a grim joke at Hyderabad that every man who took a district rode the first stage with his face to his horse's tail, to see who was following him.

To Chundoo Lall's policy Colonel Stewart appeared indifferent. The Nizam had been offered power to dismiss his Minister, and had refused to

do so, professing himself perfectly satisfied ; so things grew worse and worse.

I have not yet mentioned the prosecution of Obeed Hoosein, the late Resident's Moonshee, on the part of the trustees of the house of Wm. Palmer & Co. This person had been an immense favourite of Mr Martin, I think. But for his influence the Resident would have given Mr Palmer every assistance in the recovery and liquidation of the large sums lent by the House to the Nizam's Government : but from the moment of his arrival there was a perceptible difference ; and not only was no help given in recovering sums which had already been decided in favour of the House by the Mussulman Civil Court of Hyderabad, but every difficulty that ingenuity could suggest was thrown in the way, and Chundoo Lall and others amused themselves by telling Mr Palmer how much money they were giving to the Moonshee to get the claims altogether quashed. Sir Charles Metcalf's opinions were adverse to the House, and debates ran high. There were Palmerites and Metcalfites ; and I, young as I was, took part in the discussions, maintaining only that "if the whole of the claims were dishonest, why did Government pay any of them ? Why had the English Government applied to the Court of

King's Bench for a mandamus to adopt a despatch in Messrs Wm. Palmer & Co.'s favour? And why had the Hyderabad Courts given awards in their favour amounting to £100,000, the payment of which was hindered by the intrigues of Mr Martin's Moonshee?" No doubt I spoke as a lad, and with all the zeal of youth; but now, forty-four years after, I find my opinion unchanged.

Mr Palmer's house continued my chief resort. There was a fascination about him quite irresistible to me, his knowledge was so varied—classical, historical, and political. His father, who had been secretary to Warren Hastings, had taken part in all the most eventful scenes of early Anglo-Indian history, and had married, as was very usual then among English gentlemen, a lady of high rank, one of the Princesses of the royal house of Delhi; and his fund of knowledge and great store of anecdote made him a delightful and improving companion.

In 1830 (I forget the exact date), my prospects brightened. The adjutant of my regiment, having completed twelve years' service, was promoted to the rank of captain. I was the next in seniority, and my claims were recognised by the Resident, Colonel Stewart. I passed my exam-

ination in Hindostanee "with credit," and my name appearing in orders, I assumed my new duties. My pay was increased considerably; and I was much amused, when I asked a young lady to dance at a ball one night, to overhear her ask her mother's permission, "as I was now an adjutant."

"Are you quite sure, dear?" said mamma; "if you are, you may do so. He is quite eligible *now*."

I could not repress a smile as I led the young lady out to our dance. Are mammas still so watchful?

During the rainy season of 1830, I met with a very severe accident in riding after a panther, which led us a long chase. He got away through some high grass at last, and mounting my horse, with my gun in my hand, I made after him. My horse put his fore legs into a deep hole, as we were going at speed, and I was shot out of my saddle, and thrown on my shoulder with great violence. I got up directly, ran on to the garden where the panther had taken refuge, and pushing through the hedge I saw a fine young sepoy keeping him down with his bayonet, and another poor fellow sitting at a little distance holding his arm, which was nearly severed above the elbow. I tied his arm up with my handkerchief, and soon after the doctor arrived. He

asked me if I were likewise hurt, remarking I looked very pale, and I owned to much pain in my right shoulder. On examination it turned out that I had not only broken my collar-bone, but also the scapula and the socket of my right arm. I did not recover the use of it for many months.

At the close of the year, H.H. the Nizam expressed a desire to review the whole of the troops at Secunderabad and Bolarum. I had then charge of my regiment ; and the unusual size of our men, and their steadiness, excited the envy of officers of the Madras corps. As the Prince passed slowly on his elephant we dropped our colours, which no other regiment had done ; and he then learned, perhaps for the first time, that such troops belonged to him. After parade we were all to breakfast with his Highness. I was late, and could not easily find a seat, which the Resident observing, offered me one close to himself. The Nizam, a fine-looking man over six feet in height, with a fair skin, ruddy complexion, and blue Tartar eyes, at once recognised me and inquired my name. "He has already done me a delicate but important service," he said, to Colonel Stewart, "and I am glad to have this opportunity of thanking him. He will tell you what it was."

So I related how, one evening, my camp being pitched at the town of Kullianee, I was told that a lady of rank, attended by her secretary and a few followers, was without, in a palankeen, asking to see me. I went out at once, and my fair visitor told me that she was the youngest sister of the Nizam, married to the Lord of Kullianee, who had ill-used and even struck her; that she had left his fort, daring his people to molest her; and had come to my camp, where she was sure the English flag would protect her. Now she wanted an escort of police-horse to conduct her to Hyderabad. This I gave her, and provided escorts from stage to stage until she reached Hyderabad.

"Did you report this?" asked the Resident.

"No," I replied; "the Begum especially desired the matter should be kept private. I have recorded it in my Mahratta diary, but it is not a circumstance I could report officially."

"You are right," he said; "and you see your service has not been forgotten."

The Nizam was quite at his ease, conversing with Colonel Stewart, and occasionally asking me various questions about the country and what I had done.

Shortly after this, the Nizam's brother, Moo-

bariz-oo-Dowlah, collected a number of Arabs and Afghans, strengthened his house in the city, and proceeded to press claims against his brother which could not be for one moment entertained. The case becoming serious, and disturbances being imminent, Colonel Stewart was called upon to repress the disorder by sending in a force from Bolarum. I was still in charge of my regiment, and, preceded by two guns, we marched into the city. Had there been any fighting we should have fared badly in those narrow streets, lined with terraced houses, all covered with armed men ; but happily not a shot was fired, though the guns at the palace gates were unlimbered. The officer commanding the brigade had preceded us and induced the rebel to proceed according to orders to Golcondah, and to trust to his brother's generosity to settle all disputed claims ; and so, for a time, there was a hollow peace patched up.

Moobariz-oo-Dowlah, however, could not rest content, and the Minister had overlooked the fact that in his personal retainers he possessed the means of doing much mischief. The treasury at the Fort of Golcondah is one of the most ancient in the State, and at this time contained 100 lakhs, or a million sterling ; and the Nizam, wishing to

remove some of the money, sent his treasurer, with a small guard, for the purpose. Moobariz-oo-Dowlah refused admittance, and the others, being too weak to fight, placed a guard at the entrance. There was great consternation at Hyderabad. Five thousand Arabs, Rohillas, Sikhs, and other foreign levies, including some of the old French "Ligne," were marched out to Golcondah, and took up a position in the outer *enceinte*; but they made no impression on the Prince, and indeed were supposed to be well affected towards him. After days of useless negotiation, the Minister, on the part of the Nizam, requested the assistance of the Bolarum Contingent; so we all marched out on the 6th January 1831, and encamped opposite the north or Delhi gate, on the plain on which stand the noble mausoleums of the Kootub Shahy Kings. It was an absurd state of affairs. The interior was held by the rebel Prince, the outer *enceinte* by the Nizam's levies, who also treated us as enemies, not only refusing to allow us to enter, but threatening to fire on us, and training the fort guns on the wall so as to command our camp. I rode to the edge of the counterscarp one morning, but was warned off. However, I managed to have a look at the ditch, and saw that it was wide and deep; and by dint

of exchanging good-humoured "chaff" with the men, escaped unharmed.

We remained inactive until the 15th February, when we were suddenly ordered into the fort, and the Nizam's troops at the same time ordered to leave it. We took up a position not far from the Prince's palace, between it and the treasury, and pickets were immediately posted. I held the advanced picket with two guns and four companies. I had my guns loaded with a double charge of grape each, and as the Prince's men were watching us very closely, they must have seen that we were in earnest.

The Nizam's people began removing the treasure, but it was slow work, and for four days and nights I had not even time to change my clothes; the weather, too, was very hot. I believe mine was the post of honour, as it would have been of danger had any fighting occurred. But it was annoying to be kept there perpetually on the stretch, with constant alarms that the Arabs were coming to attack us, and with the sound of their peculiar drum and their war-songs constantly in our ears.

I was not sorry when, on the fifth morning, one of the staff rode up and told me I might withdraw my men, for the Prince had agreed to

send away his levies and keep only his immediate retainers.

A scene followed which affected me very deeply. I had drawn up my four companies, and released the guns from their position, when the men burst into loud shouts of—

“Bolo, Mahadeo Baba Ke Jey!” (“Victory to the son of Mahadeo!”)

I hardly understood it at first; but my friend S., who came to look after his guns, clapped me on the back and said, “I do congratulate you, Taylor, with all my heart; no truer proof could have been given you of the men’s affection; you will never lose your title—it will follow you all your life.” “Bolo, Mahadeo Baba Ke Jey!” he shouted to the men, and heartily did they respond; while, as I proceeded to dismiss them from parade, the cry was taken up by hundreds of both the regiments present.

Even our chief came out to say a few kind words. Captain S. was right, my *sobriquet* never left me, not even in the Mutiny, and it may still linger among the descendants of those who conferred it.

The force was to return to cantonments, but the request of the Nizam was complied with that six companies should remain in charge of the

fort, and I was appointed to take command. I was to see that no levies joined the Prince, and I was to be the medium of communication between the Prince and the Resident. "You can read Persian," the Resident said to me, as he gave me my orders, "and you are to open and read all letters the Prince sends you, whether to the Nizam, the Minister, or me : what he has hitherto written are so insolent in tone, that if the others are like them, you need not forward them. If you can make up this quarrel between the brothers, do so, and I shall be obliged to you ; but on no account make it worse."

So I remained at my post, and for a few days no notice was taken. I sent for my boat, and used to sail about on the fine tank which washed the walls of the fort, and see the Prince spying at me through a telescope. At length his Moonshee came out, and I offered him a sail one evening. In return, dishes arrived for breakfast and dinner, delightfully cooked, and I reported this friendly intercourse to the Resident. At last letters were sent—one to the Resident, another to the Nizam, very violent in tone, which I returned ; others followed daily for more than a fortnight, gradually improving in tone, but not right yet. "You've hooked your

fish, Taylor," said the Resident, laughing, "but he is too strong to land yet ; I'll not help you or interfere at all ;" and I was very glad he did not.

By - and - by my friend grew sulky, but this did not last long ; and one evening the Moonshee arrived with some extra good dishes for me, and food for the whole detachment. "Would I be pleased to draft a letter that would satisfy all parties—his honour was in my hands," this was the message delivered by the Moonshee. I did draft a letter, and the Prince flew into a violent rage over it, and abused me for having so small an idea of his dignity. We wrangled over it for a week, and he ended by placing his case unreservedly in my hands, and writing what I dictated. I made the draft in English so as to be sure of my meaning, and it was afterwards translated by me into Oordoo with my own hand, to assure the Prince that it was really mine. The letters were brought to me the next afternoon ; and as the Moonshee and I sailed about, the Prince waved a white flag by way of salute, which we answered from the 'Zora' with twelve shots from her little pieces.

I took the letters next morning to the Residency. That to the Nizam was forwarded at once, and was pronounced very satisfactory. He

would send his mother directly to Golcondah with his assurances, and would make proper arrangements for his brother's return. When I returned to Golcondah, I found the old Begum Sahiba had already arrived, and two female servants were sent to my tent to report that she and her son had fallen on each other's necks and wept much; and in a day or two Moobariz-oo-Dowlah was escorted to the city with all possible respect.

I received the thanks of the Nizam for having "for the second time rendered a service to his family."

Moobariz-oo-Dowlah sent his secretary to me afterwards, when my intended marriage was announced, with a "Fard" or memorandum in Persian, which was presented on a silver salver covered with a napkin of cloth-of-gold. He hoped I would accept for my future wife the articles mentioned in the list, as a mark of the gratitude he felt for the services I had rendered him. The presents he wished to give were very valuable, including shawls, necklaces, ornaments for the head, bracelets of diamonds and other gems, a zone of gold set with precious stones, and a necklace of seven rows of pearls with diamond pendant, the aggregate value about

20,000 rupees ; but alas ! I could only thank him for his kindness, and tell him I was not permitted to accept his gifts. He afterwards got into trouble by his connection with the Wahabee conspiracy of 1839, and eventually died a State prisoner at Golcondah. During my stay I was only once permitted to ascend the hill whereon the fort stands, and I wrote my name in the mosque, now disused ; but I never could even enter the gates afterwards, nor, since the temporary occupation of the place in 1831, has any Englishman ever been allowed to enter its precincts.

On the 25th August the following year, I was married to Mary Palmer, daughter of Wm. Palmer, Esq., Hyderabad, by the Rev. W. J. Aislabie, chaplain of the station, at Secunderabad Church ; and in December of that year my regiment was ordered to Hingolee, where we took up our abode.

Hingolee was a dreary place enough—scarcely a tree near it, no gardens, and altogether desolate. There was no amusement to be had at the station, and we passed our evenings in reading French and Italian, and my wife tried to teach me to play the harp ; but suddenly one day the sounding-board and back split up under the heat, and my progress was rudely interrupted.

On the 4th of June 1833 we were ordered to march to a place called Goleegaum, the chief of which, Jalloojee Naik, had rebelled against the Government, garrisoned his fort, and was plundering the country. The town was reported to be forty miles distant, and we started under a blazing sun. We were obliged to halt several times, but by dint of resting during the heat of the day and going on at night, we at last sighted the place, lying in a hollow beneath us, and keeping up a sharp fire from its walls. We had, in reality, come upwards of a hundred miles, and the thermometer had been 114° under the shade of a thick banian-tree at our last halting-place. How our men, laden with forty rounds of ammunition and two days' provisions each, did it I don't know. I helped them as much as I could by dispensing with pantaloons, which were tied up in bundles and placed on the spare carriage-bullocks. Many a Hindoo song was sung in chorus as we marched, relieved by the old cry, "Bolo, Mahadeo Baba Ke Jey!" and on calling the roll, when we reached the camping-ground, I found that, with the exception of five men who had been left to burn a man that had died of cholera on the road, every one was present, and apparently fresh.

Jaloojee Naik, the rebel, was still in the fort, and maintained a continuous fire, some of the balls cutting the branches of the tree we were under; and it was arranged that we should attack the fort the following day. It was a very strong place—a square mass, with a large bastion at each corner, loopholed for musketry and wall-pieces. The height of the wall was fifty-two feet from the parapet to the ground; the whole was in excellent repair.

We held a council of war, and arranged matters as follows :—

First, the fort was to be shelled by the howitzer. I was to occupy the crest of a rising ground opposite the village, and advance through the village in case the shells did not take effect, and attack the outworks. Captain T—— was to set fire to the village, so that the sparks and burning thatch might be carried over the fort by the wind, which was very strong.

I reconnoitred my post that evening, and had a narrow escape, a ball passing through my cap; but I saw enough to show me the place was “ugly,” and might prove tough work for us. I think we all felt it so, though little was said as we parted for the night. We were to take up our position at earliest dawn. The stars

were very bright, and the ceaseless firing kept up from the parapets of the fort had, I remember, a very beautiful effect. The place seemed full of men.

Suddenly a sentry challenged, and we all sprang to our feet. I called out not to fire, and ran forward with some of my men. A moment later, a short figure advanced and threw himself at my feet, and I found it was Jalloojee Naik himself, with five or six attendants, who all gave up their arms. I sent him in at once to Captain T——'s tent, and received orders from him to take two companies and occupy the fort at daylight. I felt very thankful for this termination to the affair, especially when I saw the place we were to have attacked. As soon as it was light we marched to the entrance-gate, and desired the garrison to come out singly, first depositing their arms inside. There were eighty-five men only, as the remainder of the three hundred were absent at the Mohurram festival, not expecting our visit. What a place it was! The courts and their entrance-gates grew narrower and narrower, till the last one would not admit two men abreast. There were store-houses filled with grain, rice, and *ghee*, stables and cattle-sheds, stores of forage and provisions. It seemed deserted now, except

for a few women ; and my men began to remove as much as possible of the grain and other property, which was sold at the drum-head, and the proceeds divided among them. I secured the rebel's household gods for my share, and a match-lock inlaid with gold.

Some camp-followers had set fire to a house in the village, and the wind blowing strong towards the fort, brought with it pieces of burning thatch and volumes of smoke. The stacks of forage took fire, and the wood-work of the buildings followed. I was about to depart when I fancied I heard the wail of an infant, and searching hurriedly about, I found a young woman lying insensible upon a bed, with a very young baby beside her. I took both in my arms, and staggered out through the fire and smoke, and meeting two of my men, who were anxious about me, they relieved me of my burden, and we left the place to the flames. The rebel Rajah was told of the rescue of his wife and child, but he only replied, "They had better have died," and relapsed into sullen silence. His atrocities had been fearful. Persons had been suspended by the heels over the battlements of the fort ; others had had their ears stuffed with gunpowder, which was ignited ; but I may spare the reader these.

He was made over to the Civil Superintendent of the district, and I do not know what his fate was eventually. His surrender alone prevented his being hanged on a bastion of the fort.

We returned to Hingolee on the 21st June by twelve easy stages, instead of the three we had marched the distance in before. Some rain had fallen, and it was cooler.

Now I became very busy. Those famous discoveries in regard to the practice of Thuggee had recently been made at Jubbulpore and Saugor by (then) Captain Sleeman, which made a sensation in India never to be forgotten. By the confessions of one gang who were apprehended, many Thugs in Central India were brought to justice; and at last the Thugs of the Deccan were denounced by these approvers, and as many lived near Hingolee, they were at once arrested. I volunteered my services in the labour of collecting evidence, and they were accepted. Day after day I recorded tales of murder, which, though horribly monotonous, possessed an intense interest; and as fast as new approvers came in, new mysteries were unravelled and new crimes confessed. Names of Thugs all over the Deccan were registered, and I found one list containing the names of nearly all those whom I had suspected

in my old district. The reader will remember my intense anxiety on this subject in 1829, and my conviction that deadly crime existed and was only awaiting discovery ; now it was all cleared, but I felt sore that it had not fallen to my lot to win the fame of the affair.

Some men of the artillery and some camp-followers deserted at this time. They were also Thugs ; and it was a horrible thought that these miscreants had been in our midst, and it made many in the station, and especially the ladies, very nervous. We had searched for bodies of murdered people wherever we were told to look by the approvers, and invariably found them, sometimes singly, sometimes whole parties, and the details were so sickening we resolved to open no more graves. I wrote and sent home to my father an article on Thuggee, which was shown to Sir Edward Bulwer, who sent me word that had he possessed any local knowledge of India or its people, he would write a romance on the subject ; why did I not do so ? I pondered over this advice, and hence my novel, ‘Confessions of a Thug.’

The year did not end pleasantly. A horrible plot, said to be of Wahabee contrivance, to murder all Europeans at Bangalore, and sell their

women as slaves, was discovered. There were disturbances in Oudh and other northern provinces, and famine was rapidly spreading from Kathiawar and Goozerat over the Deccan. We did what we could at Hingolee, first individually, then by general subscription. A Brahmin cook was engaged, whose bread and boiled pulse all would eat, and a good meal was given to each person once a-day. The system worked well, and our relief-books showed that three thousand persons received food daily and were all in good health. But in the rural districts thousands of people and cattle must have perished; the gaunt attenuated forms of some who arrived to ask for aid were pitiful to behold, and the roads were strewn with the bodies of those who died on their way from weakness and starvation.

During the next three years I had much domestic trouble. The birth and subsequent death of two dear children, the severe and continued illness of my wife, and my own very narrow escape with my life from terrible jungle fever, contracted at Goodaloor, at the foot of the Neilgherry Hills, whither we had been ordered by the doctors for change of air for my wife,—all these events saddened our lives and caused us much distress.

Of the beauty of the scenery on the Hills I need not speak here. It has often been described and enlarged upon since, but at that time it was less familiar to those at home; and I find my letters teeming with descriptions of our journey—of wooded hills and towering mountains, of trees and waterfalls, of precipitous crags and deep wooded glens, of ferns and blackberries and violets to remind us of dear old England, of sunsets and sunrises, rolling mists and cool fresh breezes—and, above all, of gratitude for my wife's returning health. My enemy, the fever, however, came back when I was at Ootacamund with renewed violence, and the medical men looked grave, and spoke of a voyage to England as my only hope of life. How could this be accomplished? Furlough was prohibited, and the only chance was a voyage to the Cape—dreary enough, but still it must be tried; and meantime we stayed on, mostly at Coonoor, where I amused myself trying to sketch some of the most striking views, and was always enchanted with its beauty, so varied and so picturesque on every side. It was at this time, when I was in sore trouble at the loss of my second child, that I had the good fortune to be introduced to the then Governor-General, Lord William Bentinck. He was stay-

ing at the Hills and had often noticed my boy, not knowing whose child he was. When he died, he wrote me a kind letter of sympathy, asking me to come and see him. I did so as soon as I was able, and so faint and weak was I that I could not stand when I entered his room. He took me in his arms, laid me down on a sofa, and sent for some wine. I told him, when I was stronger, that I had two letters for him which I had been unable to deliver before—one from Mr Newnham, and the other from my uncle, Captain Robert Mitford.

“You don’t mean it,” he said, as his face beamed with pleasure; “he is one of my dearest friends; why did you not come to me at once?”

“I have only just received this letter,” I replied, “and I did not like to intrude before having received an introduction.”

“Now what can I do for you?” he asked.

I mentioned that the Paymastership at Hingolee would soon be vacant—could he appoint me? and he promised to assist me if he could. “Only,” I added, “I fear I shall be obliged to go to the Cape on leave, this fever has so shattered my health.”

“Why not to England?” he asked.

Then I poured forth the tale of the furlough

grievance, and he could scarcely credit that such an order had been passed. He sent his secretary for a copy of the orders, and saw it was all true.

"I shall put in a minute at the next Council," he said; "we can get over this, and I shall record that my friend Mr Taylor is to be allowed leave to England when necessary. That will be enough for you."

"But, my lord," I said, "though I am more grateful than I can express for your kind consideration towards me, my case alone will not help my brother officers. May I plead for them as well?"

"Certainly," said Lord William, "you are quite right; and though my minute as regards yourself will stand in case of urgent necessity, yet all of you shall be released soon from this restriction. Write to-day to the senior officer of your 'locals,' bid him send in a memorial without delay, and I will have it passed."

The friend I wrote to despatched the memorial as soon as he could obtain the signatures, and the question passed through Council without difficulty.

After this interview I dined frequently with the Governor-General, meeting there many charm-

ing and interesting characters, amongst others the then Mr Macaulay, whose conversation I found intensely fascinating ; his seemingly boundless knowledge of life, his acquaintance with history and philosophy, his fiery zeal in argument, and his calm eloquence in oratory, opened to me new subjects of thought for future study. Oh, if I had been among such men always, I thought, I should have been very different !

I grew stronger in health, and my regiment being ordered to Ellichpoor at the end of December, we left the Hills about October 10. We did not return by the way we had come, for we had only too much cause to dread it, but went by Coonoor and Coimbatore, where there was a most extraordinary collection of large figures of horses in terra cotta. I have never heard of these in any other part of India, and could obtain no tradition of their construction or their origin. They were revered by the people as offerings to a divinity they locally worship, but possess no particular value.

At Bangalore I was pressed to stay and act as interpreter to a court-martial about to sit, as, strange to say, no competent linguist was available ; but I could not do it without much loss of time, so we pushed on, and finally reached Ellich-

poor on the 3d February. We found two infantry regiments, one cavalry, and some artillery, at the station, so that there was no lack of society. I practised my drawing, and began to paint in oils, victimising many friends to sit for their portraits, and finding endless occupation and delight. Thus with military duties, and shooting, and excursions to various places of interest within reach, our time passed pleasantly.

It is not fitting for me here to undertake political discussions, or to comment on the career of the illustrious man who at this time quitted India; but I feel I must add my tribute to his integrity of purpose, liberality of action, and the commencement of that system of progress which is now bearing ample fruit. No more eloquent tribute to a statesman was ever written than that by Mr Macaulay, engraved on the pedestal of Lord William Bentinck's statue at Calcutta. It contains no flattery, but a simple record of the real motives of the man "whose constant study it was to elevate the moral and intellectual character of the Government intrusted to his care." To me individually, and to our service, he had rendered inestimable benefit. I was told a testimonial was to be presented to me for what I had done, but I checked the scheme as soon as

I heard of it. There was only one man to whom gratitude could be expressed, and that was the Governor-General. He was succeeded by Sir Charles Metcalf.

Mr Palmer's affairs seemed mending. An award was made by Mr M'Leod for a portion of the debt, and twenty-four lakhs were paid in, the Nizam advancing most of the money, and the creditors were repaid in full. But the other awards of the civil courts against other debtors, for whom the Nizam's Government was security, were not adjusted; and these, together with the first balance of twenty lakhs upon the great loan, remained to be settled.

The balance was not disputed, and they were left for payment, and still remain unadjusted and due, in spite of many memorials to successive governments, which have been hitherto without effect.

In December I was promoted to the rank of captain, having completed twelve years' service; but I was allowed for a time to fulfil the duties of adjutant.

The following year I began my tale 'Confessions of a Thug.' I had never attempted any work of the kind before, and I found it intensely fascinating—the work seemed to grow so rapidly

in my thoughts and under my hands, and I enjoyed the sensation ardently. I remember giving the first few chapters to one of my brother officers to read, and his constant demands for "more," and his perpetual scoldings for my "laziness" in writing so slowly, were accepted by me as a high compliment.

Mr Palmer, too, encouraged me to proceed. He criticised and commended, and his marginal notes were of great use to me, and often very amusing.

In 1837 we made a charming excursion to Boorhaunpoor. My old friend Major Sutherland had been appointed Resident at Gwalior, and invited a party to meet him and shoot tigers. It was a very beautiful journey, and I could fill pages with descriptions of all the places of interest through which we passed. I took several sketches at Boorhaunpoor, every street and turning abounding in subjects for the pencil, so that the difficulty was in knowing where to begin.

Boorhaunpoor has been always famous for its brocade-weaving. We visited some of the looms, and watched how the gold and silver threads were deftly woven in. But the most interesting part of the work was the making of the gold thread itself, which we followed through all its stages.

A piece of silver about the length and thickness of the middle finger is first gilt several times, according to the value of the thread to be produced. It is then hammered out into a long bar, as it were, and drawn through plates of fine steel, perforated with holes, which are changed each time to one smaller, till the wire becomes as fine as a hair. This is then drawn, two wires at a time, through a still finer plate, over a bright steel anvil by a man who hits each a sharp blow with a steel hammer. Thus the whole becomes a flattened wire of exquisite fineness and ductility, which is then wound on a reel. A long and very thin silk thread, with a spindle at the end, is now passed over a hook in the ceiling, and a man, giving the spindle a dexterous twirl, applies the gold wire to it, which he runs up as far as practicable. The gold thread thus made is wound upon a reel, and the next length begun. The manual dexterity shown, and rapidity with which the process is accomplished, is very curious. I have never read any description of it, and hence am tempted to make this digression.

We had capital sport and a series of tiger-hunts while enjoying the splendid hospitality of the Resident. One incident occurred which amused us all. I had given up my seat on

Major Sutherland's elephant, and my guns also, to another gentleman, as I was disinclined to go out that day, when one of the sirdars came up and asked me why I was not going.

"Oh," said he, "take my elephant and see the fun, even if you do not shoot. He is very small, but very easy, and will not jolt you."

I accepted his offer, and mounted the little beast, on which I sat comfortably astride on a well-stuffed pad. As I passed my tent I called for my sun-hat, and my old tent-pitcher ran out, crying—

"You are not surely going without a gun, sahib? Take mine; I have just cleaned it, and I will load it for you with ball to shoot the tiger."

This ancient weapon was a French musket of the last century, only known to explode on rare occasions. I had myself seen its owner sitting behind a bush snapping it at a hare which was calmly sitting at a short distance quite unmoved, but he was unable to get it to go off, and when it did, the hare had taken its departure after all. This venerable piece, which had taken part in the wars of Bussy, was brought to me.

"It will kick a bit," said the old man, as he placed it in my hands; "but you won't mind that

when you kill the tiger." He then made a salaam to it, patted it, and said to it: "Do well, my son; you will be with the master;" and we started, I flourishing my weapon, and being not a little "chaffed" on my accoutrements.

"Never mind," said I, "I'll kill the tiger;" but at the same time I had not the smallest intention of discharging the gun at all.

The place was reached—the tiger found. Every one fired—no one hit him. I retired to a piece of waste ground some distance off to be out of the way, when, with a great roar, the tiger dashed forward, ready to spring, within a few yards of my little elephant, which stood like a rock. I fired instinctively, I think, though the recoil nearly knocked me backwards, but the tiger did not move. I told my driver to get off, as he was going to spring, when the man exclaimed—

"He's dead, sahib—quite dead!" and as he spoke, the fierce grim head fell to one side. The old "Frenchman" had for once done his duty, and the triumph was adjudged to me.

I had had a very narrow escape, for my little elephant was not higher than the door of a room, and the result must have been terrible had the tiger made his spring.

The hot-weather season was especially trying,

and brought back my fever, with severe neuralgia, and I was racked by pain.

“This won’t do,” said the doctor. “You must go away ; we can do no more here.”

My wife answered quietly, “Yes, doctor, we will go ;” and so it was settled : and on the 1st November I received my certificate and three years’ leave of absence.

Had the old furlough rule still existed, I must, humanly speaking, have died.

We travelled on by easy stages, visiting Adjunta and its marvellous caves, now so well known by photographs, and Major Gill’s splendid fresco-paintings, which met so untimely a fate in the great fire at the Crystal Palace.

We also visited the Ellora caves, and the cool air invigorated me, and brought back a feeling of health to which I had been long a stranger. At length we reached Bombay, pitching our tents on the esplanade.

I had been ordered not to proceed direct to England, but to linger in Egypt or Arabia on account of their dry climate, and I set to work to see how this could be effected.

The only steamer about to start was already full, cabin accommodation being very limited. Various schemes were thought of and failed.

At last my agents told me one day that an Armenian gentleman had taken his passage on board a large Arab "buggalow," bound for Mocha, which had capital accommodation, and we could manage well if we took our servants.

We went to see the ship, a large one of her class, about 400 tons burthen. She had come from Batavia, and was going to Mocha, with a light cargo. She had a poop and stern cabin, which occupied the whole breadth of the ship, with a bath-room attached. In front, the cuddy and two cabins—one for the captain, the other for our Armenian fellow-passenger, who, fortunately, spoke Arabic like a native.

We found our servants very willing to go with us, and we laid in our stock of provisions, live stock and liquors, not forgetting abundance of bottled water, several goats, two small tents, carpets and rugs.

Some of our friends thought us very rash, but I argued if a vessel could come safely from Java, she could go to Mocha with a dead fair wind, and we felt no alarm. So early in January we sailed out of the harbour, all things promising us a fair voyage.

CHAPTER V.

1838.

I AWOKE the next morning and went early on deck. How delicious it was, the cool pleasant breeze and the ship rolling lazily along under her enormous sail! The captain, mate, and some others were on the poop, and I was greeted with a general "salaam aliekoom," which I returned, Arab fashion, and we all sat down. Presently the captain's breakfast was brought, rice and fried fish. "Bismilla, sit down with us," cried he; "here we are all one, Arabs and Christians. Thank God! we have got away from those Kafirs of Bombay, who were no better than Hindoos! Come, sir, and eat with us." I did eat heartily, and found the viands very good indeed.

At noon the mate, to my surprise, brought out a sextant, took the sun's altitude, and worked it

out in English figures. He had three chronometers for longitude, and said he would take a lunar for correction in a day or two. All seemed so perfectly regular—for I had checked the calculations—that I was quite satisfied we could come to no harm through bad navigation. We had plenty of air and room, our own servants, and in our Armenian fellow-passenger an intelligent, agreeable companion. He had brought with him large stores of Armenian beef, which was delicious, and is prepared in this wise.

“Take pieces of lean, but good juicy beef, two or three cubic inches in size, boil them partially, then rub in salt, pepper, and a *souppçon* of onion. Fry in melted butter, or lard, or oil. Put loosely into jars, and pour boiling water over all till the jar is full. The beef will keep for years if closely covered.”

Altogether it was like travelling in one's own yacht, and was most enjoyable. I had told the captain that I belonged to H.H. the Nizam's service, and knew all the Arab sirdars of his court—Abdoolla ben Ali, Oomr ben Ooz, and others—and he said I should find their names very useful to me on my journey.

We sailed past Cape Partak, with its grand bold precipices descending into the sea, and its per-

petually varying colours and tints. Then headland after headland, all of the same bold type, succeeded, until we cast anchor not far from shore opposite the town of Shahar.

Presently the sheikh left the fort, and his procession looked very gay as it wound down to the beach, where several boats were waiting; they then put off with slow, measured stroke, the rowers singing in chorus as they approached our vessel. The sheikh, a fine old man, courteously invited us on shore and made us welcome. My wife was carried off to the women's apartments, and I conversed with our host, gravely smoking *nargailés* (water pipes) and sipping coffee the while. In the evening he took us to his garden without the town, and after that more pipes and more coffee, till the sun went down, when one of the men cried the invocation to prayer : carpets were spread, and all present performed their devotions. We then took our leave and returned to the ship, the starlight being more brilliant than I ever remember seeing it before. We continued our voyage next day, having landed our cargo and halted at Macul-lah. This proved a very picturesque and curious place, lying at the foot of huge mountains dipping into the sea. We went ashore, but the sheikh here was surly and indifferent, and after

pipes and coffee we took our leave. The captain told us the sheikh was in a bad humour about the "Aden affair," and we should soon find out all about it at Aden, which we reached in due time, casting anchor in the back harbour as the sun was setting.

"I do not see any English ships," said the captain; "I wonder there are not some here."

Next morning he and I landed, and took donkeys to ride into the town. When we came to the barrier fortifications, the guard at the gates refused to let us pass, but eventually allowed us to sit in the guard-room till permission should be obtained from the sheikh for our entrance.

The sheikh himself soon appeared, followed by a numerous company, and sitting down ordered pipes and coffee. I did not like his look or that of his people, who swaggered about stroking their moustaches in a very Hyderabad fashion. I was not noticed; and in a conversation which ensued between the sheikh and our captain, I saw the face of the latter become very grave, and my Arab servant, as he handed me some coffee, stooped down and whispered, "You must get back quickly or they will seize you." This was not a pleasant prospect, as the gate was closed and resistance would have been hopeless. I could

not understand a word of what was going on. At last I heard "Nizam" and "Abdoola ben Ali," occurring in the wrangle; and after a while the captain told me I might go, and with a smile the sheikh offered me his hand and bade me "depart in peace."

"Go at once," said the captain. "I will tell you all afterwards."

You may be sure I was only too thankful to make my way back to the ship, and I learned afterwards that my being in the Nizam's service and knowing two of his Arab chieftains intimately, had alone saved me from a very unpleasant detention. The English, said the sheikh, had been intriguing with a member of his family to get possession of the place, and he disapproved of the whole transaction. The English had fired from their ships and killed many people, and he had determined to keep me in irons till an indemnity had been paid.

What an escape I had had! The people were much excited, and but for my Hyderabad friends, I had a poor chance of getting away. I was indeed very very thankful for the great mercy shown to me, and we were heartily glad when the captain weighed anchor and we left the dreary rock behind us.

We continued our voyage to Mocha, where we parted company with our good captain, who transferred us to another Arab vessel commanded by a friend of his, "Salim ben Ahmed," son of a rich merchant at Jeddah. At Mocha I found an English agency house, and some officers of the Indian Navy, who scarcely believed that I had visited Aden and had got out of it again. I had been in the greatest danger, for, as soon as a force could be sent, Aden was to be attacked, and my life would surely have been forfeited.

Our new captain was anxious to proceed. We were to sail inside the reefs in smooth water, by day only. It was strange work threading our way in and out of the reefs. The weather was delicious, and every evening we made for some rocky island and were moored to it for the night. We often, in the evenings, took the boat and went out among the islands, occasionally landing to collect the lovely shells which abounded, or we took out our lines to fish, and were generally very successful. Such strange creatures we fished up! Such varied forms and brilliant colours! I began to make a collection of drawings of them, which I afterwards exhibited at the meeting of the "British Association at Newcastle-on-Tyne," and

eventually presented to the Linnæan Society, for which I received the distinction of being elected an honorary member.

The beauty of the beds of coral on these still evenings was indescribable : they were like huge beds of flowers — pink, red, emerald, yellow, and purple, mingled with grey and brown ; and the extraordinary clearness of the water gave us a feeling of hanging in the air which was very strange. We were really sorry when we neared Jeddah, and cast anchor in the harbour. Salim and I had concocted a scheme that I was to leave my wife at his house at Jeddah under the care of his mother, while he and I went to Mecca to see the *haj* (pilgrimage). “No one will recognise you,” he said ; “you are browner than I am, and I will lend you clothes : we shall do the journey in the night.” So we landed, and next day we were to start. We had, we thought, kept the secret safe ; but it had leaked out somehow, and our consul at Jeddah came to me and told me the Pacha had sent for him, and asked him whether I was going to Mecca.

“He will be in danger without a firman from the Sultan, tell him,” said the Pacha, “and I cannot give one.”

“You had better come and tell the Pacha you

will give it up," said the consul, "for the gates will now be carefully watched, and you are not safe."

I saw there was no use resisting, and very reluctantly I went to the Pacha. He laughed heartily when I assured him I would not go, and answered in French—

"I do not care, but others do, and your life would be in peril."

An English ship lay at anchor in the harbour, and proved to belong to Messrs Palmer of Calcutta, my wife's relations. The captain insisted on our coming at once on board, and we lived there most luxuriously for nearly a month. I had little hope of getting on to Suez during the *haj*, and our good friend, Captain Hill, offered to send us on to Tor, at the entrance of the Gulf of Akaba, in the beautiful long-boat, in which a cabin could easily be rigged up by awnings, and which would be under the command of the boatswain; but this plan was frustrated by Captain Hill receiving orders to return sooner than he expected, and the long-boat would not have time to rejoin the ship.

I heard of a good *buggalow* about to sail for Suez. We took our passages in her, and left our kind friends with regret. We intended to land at

Tor, go to Mount Sinai, and thence to Jerusalem for Easter.

The morning we sailed I awoke hearing an unusual shuffling of feet and a buzz of many voices. On going on deck, to my horror I found it and the poop both crowded with pilgrims from Mecca, who, the captain said, had been sent on board by order of the Pacha.

In vain I remonstrated, representing that I had taken the whole poop. The captain would or could do nothing, and I told him I should appeal to the authorities at Yembo for redress. On arriving there, I sent my servant to the Pacha, requesting him to come and see the plight we were in. Men and women constantly intruding into our cabin, a frightful crowd, the effluvia and vermin from which were sickening, and quite impossible to describe; added to this, we suffered terrible abuse for being "infidels," and my wife was afraid to leave her cabin.

The pilgrims lived mostly on dry biscuit, and very pungent bitter cheese. Few only had the privilege of cooking any food; and I very much feared that some frightful epidemic would break out among them soon.

At length a Kavas, one of the Pacha's messengers, arrived, with the servant that I had sent

before ; he brought a kind message from his master, entreating us to come ashore at once. This was impossible, as we durst not leave our baggage ; but the Kavas carried off our captain, who was in a terrible fright, and then returned with a handsome boat belonging to the Pacha, and orders to take us and all our belongings to a Government vessel, where, he said, the Pacha would meet us in the morning. We were not long in complying with this civility ; we once more breathed the fresh air, and the last I saw of the vessel was a scramble among the crowd to get near our cabin and flock into it.

Next morning the Pacha visited us, accompanied by his secretary and staff. He was dressed beautifully, in a costume made of fine brown cloth, with a profusion of braiding of a darker shade of the same colour, and had several decorations on his breast. He spoke French with fluency, and a little English, and nothing could exceed his courtesy and kindness. “ I am afraid to treat this rascal as he deserves,” he said. “ If I had the power, I would have bastinadoed him severely ; but he belongs to the English agent at Suez, and I dare not ; but I can at least release you from your present uncomfortable position. I will put a crew and Reis on whom you may

depend on board this vessel, and you can dismiss them whenever you please. All you have to do is to give them their wages and food, which amount to very little. Take the ship to Tor, and if the wind is against you, you can take her on to Kosseir." I accepted his kindness most gratefully. That afternoon our new Reis arrived, and early next morning we left Yembo with a handsome present of dates, Turkish sweetmeats, and new live-stock, fodder for our goats, and all we needed, from our kind friend.

I was now my own commander, with a crew of twenty-four men and a pilot. I could go where I pleased, and the Reis proved a good navigator. Yembo, from the sea, was the handsomest Arab town I had yet seen. It is built on the margin of the shore, up a rising ground, and the lines of whitewashed houses had a pretty effect. This town is the port of Medina, and the residence of the provincial governor, and there seemed to be a good number of Turkish troops stationed there. We gave passages, at their earnest solicitation, to a Turk and his wife, who had been with us on our former ship. He was old, and in bad health, and their state was really pitiable. His wife promised to be useful, and proved eminently so during our voyage.

We had a delicious sail up to Tor, between the reefs and the mainland, and at night we made fast to one of the islands, or cast anchor in shallow water, and then went off in the boat seeking endless treasures in shells, fish, and coral. The colours of the shallows seemed to grow more intense and vivid—of all shades, from the deepest violet and purple blue, to the most brilliant turquoise, emerald green, and red; and as we threaded the often narrow channels the effects were charming. The coast up to Yembo had been comparatively flat and uninteresting, but from thence it grew much bolder in character. Fine headlands were seen in front of us dipping into the sea, and the voyage increased each day in interest, till at length the rocky peaks and precipices of the Jebel Antar range stood out before us, and behind them lay the Gulf of Akaba. In this portion of our little voyage the scenery was very striking, and the atmospheric effects wonderful, as the sun ran its course, and the shadows of the peaks and ravines changed till all was merged in a soft violet tint as evening closed in. We were alone; we saw no fishing-boats or other craft, no sign of dwelling or life upon the shore, which looked utterly desolate and barren in its grandeur. Very grand, too, is the mouth of the

Gulf of Akaba, with the range of Jebel Antar to the south, and the far more lofty and imposing mountains of the Peninsula of Sinai to the north. The gulf itself was like a large lake shimmering in the mid-day sun as we entered it, the ranges of mountains on either side being veiled in lovely violet mist.

Very soon the little town of Tor lay before us, and as we anchored, and hoisted our English flag, a boat put off with one likewise flying at her stern; and we found our visitor was the secretary to the English agent, who brought his chief's compliments, and asked what he could do for us.

We ordered pipes and coffee, and sat down to talk.

"If this wind holds," said our friend, "you can go on to Suez; but if a *shimal* or north wind blows, you may be kept here for a fortnight; the sea is dangerous then for your small vessel."

"And Akaba?" I asked.

"Impossible," he answered; "even the Sultan's firman is at present useless. The Arabs are fighting, and the passes quite closed. You must give up that idea."

"Well, then, can we get to Mount Sinai, and to Jerusalem?"

"I fear not," he replied; "but I will go on

shore and ask the sheikh. Perhaps you will come with me ?" and I went.

The old English agent was very civil, ordered pipes and coffee, and we proceeded to discuss the business, the Arab chiefs having come in.

"You could only do it by yourself," they said ; "we could not carry you there with the lady: you would not fear a few shots if you were alone. Have you a firman from the Sultan ?"

"No," I said ; "only a passport from the Bombay Government."

"Ah!" said they all, "that is of no use ; we could not be responsible for any Englishman without one from Constantinople."

So Sinai was given up, and a *shimal* coming on, the Reis said we could not stay where we were ; there was no use in staying—the wind would soon moderate, and we could cross over to Kosseir very quickly and safely. So next morning we started with a fresh cool breeze, and we had, at least, the whole of Egypt before us, and the sights that we had to see would be ample compensation for our disappointment.

Our voyage was most propitious ; we reached Kosseir very quickly, without touching a rope. On our arrival we found no difficulty in procuring camels ; and my servant "Abdoollah," who

had been there before, and knew several of the principal people, was a great help to me. We remained on board our ship till all our preparations were complete, and our tents pitched under some date-trees near the town. Then we landed, and walked through the place, once the ancient Berenice, with no trace left now of its former greatness, except the ruins which lay on either hand.

No accommodation for my wife's journey could be devised, except large *kajawas* or panniers, slung upon a huge camel, with an awning above to keep off the sun; and with soft bedding these were made endurable enough. For myself, I had a camel, and two donkeys in reserve. The Turk rode a donkey, and his wife a camel, on which were all their worldly goods.

So we set out on our first march into the desert which lies between Kosseir and Keneh, the old beaten track of Egyptian, Greek, and Roman traders, each in their turn through ages of the past. My previous idea of a desert was that it would be flat and sandy, but instead our road lay through a hollow, with considerable hills on either side, affording striking and pretty views at every turn. Here and there the valleys were very narrow, and high precipices towered on either hand. Again they widened into lateral

ravines, which seemed interminable. In many places the rocks had Egyptian, Greek, or Roman characters carved upon them. Does any one know of these, and of their purport ?

It was not very hot, for the north wind blew cool and fresh, and we could travel all day. I had never left my camel, and towards evening became very tired. I lay down on some warm sand near our tents, and gradually stiffened, to the great alarm of my wife ; but my servant and the camel-men said they would soon cure me. I was turned on my face, and my back rubbed with castor-oil well heated. By this time some large cakes of *dhoura* meal had been prepared and partly baked, and these smeared with oil were bound on my back, the whole length of the spine, and partially covering my ribs. They were almost too hot to bear, but I obeyed orders, and allowed myself to be swathed up like a mummy. Next morning, to my great delight, I had neither pain nor ache ; the remedy, rough though it was, had been effectual.

On the fourth morning we met some men driving camels, and carrying water-melons on their heads—how refreshing they were ! I think I see now our old Turk, whose lips were much chapped by the dry wind, sitting on a stone, intensely

appreciative of the large slice I handed to him. A few miles further, from the crest of the pass, we had our first look at Egypt.

It was very beautiful; the cultivation reached nearly to the foot of the descent, of a vivid green, and most luxuriant; wheat, barley, pulse, cotton, and sugar-cane, with fields of yellow and blue lupins in flower, patches of crimson clover, with date-trees, and sycamore, and our Indian *babul*, or *mimosa*, everywhere.

My Hindoo servant cried out, excitedly, "India! again India! are we come back to it?" No, it was not India certainly, but it was inexpressibly lovely; and our hearts were full of gratitude to God for His goodness in bringing us so far in health and safety. No more rough travelling, no more privation; but instead, a sojourn among glorious scenes of antiquity and beauty which we had longed to see.

A few miles more and we had reached Kench, which seemed exactly like an Indian (Deccan) town, with its clay-roofed terraced houses; and we were taken at once to the house of the English agent, who placed very comfortable rooms at our disposal, and took all the trouble of dismissing my camel-men off my hands.

The house was scrupulously clean, and our

friend's wife was a first-rate cook. I remember two dishes in particular—one of quails, fried somehow in vine-leaves, and another of long cucumbers, stuffed with delicately - flavoured mince - meat—that would have satisfied much daintier palates than ours. We often wished to be able to converse with our host, who was a Copt, apparently a merchant, in good circumstances; but the only mode of communication was Italian, of which he knew a very little, so we did not make much progress.

I had some pleasant shooting — quail were plentiful, and I found snipe, too, in the little swamps, so that my bag was generally a good one. One day we sent out our tents a little distance from the town, and had a picnic, spending a quiet, dreamy day under the shade, enjoying the delicious cool wind, the great river flowing past us, and the peaceful scenery beyond. “You must see Dendera to-morrow,” said our host; and we went, crossing by a ferry-boat, and finding donkeys waiting for us on the other side. We breakfasted at the vestibule of the temple, and then set to work to examine it, and the old Roman town beyond it. My servant declared we must be in India, because there was a real Hindoo temple; but the temple of Dendera was

more imposing than any I had ever seen, and its grand proportions, at first not easily understood, grew upon one hour by hour. The roof is covered with names, modern and ancient; Greek, Roman, Egyptian, and Arab, as well as every European nation, has its record of the "John Smith" of the inscriber, and I added mine to the number.

The Roman town interested me very much; for not only were the narrow streets clearly defined, but some of the houses and walls, which were nearly perfect, and the round arches, though built only of sun-dried bricks cemented with mud, remained as they had been first erected, perhaps two thousand years before. We left the place with regret, grim and desolate though it was. The temple looked very grand in the evening light. No rain falls here, which accounts for the preservation of mud walls and arches. No rain for 2000 years—can one realise it?

We had seen all the sights, our clothes had been washed, our boat was ready—a small *dahabieh*, very clean and comfortable—our luggage was stowed away on board; but what were we to do with our Turk and his wife? He was very feeble, and she was of great use to us, so they were allowed a corner on board; and we bade

farewell to our kind friends, who gently declined any recompense, until at length I bethought myself of my small tents, which I offered them, and which were gratefully accepted. On our arrival at the river, we came upon an Arab woman frying pancakes and omelets for the boatmen. The woman had good fresh butter, and the smell was very appetising; so we sat down and had our meal of the pancakes and omelet, with salad and hard-boiled eggs, and ate till we could eat no more. How good it was!

Our intention was to go up to Assouan and Philæ, then return and stay a while at Thebes, and so go down to Cairo. If the *shimal* lasted, we should run up to Thebes very fast. If we lost it, we might have varying winds; but not a *khamseen* for a good while. It seemed a very pleasant programme; we should see all the wonders of Egypt, we should sit in the gate of Ethiopia; and as our boat was very light, there was no fear of the Cataract.

The Nile is far better known now than it was in those days—drawings, engravings, paintings, and photographs have been made of the scenes along its banks, and are familiar in England to all, so that any description of mine from memory now, would, I fear, be incomplete and tiresome.

Yet there are some scenes which can never fade or change as long as memory lasts. Who that has seen them could forget the granite quarries above Thebes, with the blocks of granite split from the native rock ready for transmission down the river? or cease to wonder at the means of transport and erection? Who can forget the grandeur of the giant figures of "Abu Simbel," or the perfect temple at Edfu? Above all, who can forget the wild scenery of the Cataract and Assouan—the shouts during the ascent amid the seething waters; or the welcome change to the placid pool above, with exquisite Philæ beyond, sitting a queen indeed upon the waters, glowing in the bright sunlight?

We stayed at Philæ for five days, living in the temple during the day, and sleeping on board our boat at night; and our enjoyment was intense. English visitors were rare then, and many boat-loads of natives came alongside to have a look at us, and bring us presents. I think, among all the many scenes which rise in my memory as I write, that those evenings spent at Philæ were the most beautiful, when the still, long pool reflected the brilliant tints of the sky, among the dark basalt rocks, till all faded into dim grey; and the moon, near the full, cast over

all a flood of silver light, and the temple, the ruins, and the feathery palms were bathed in it, till they seemed hardly of this world, and we sat on and watched the stars appearing, one by one, and drinking in the strange "eerie" beauty around us. If there is a place on earth where one's heart swells, and one's throat seems to tighten, it is Philæ.

Back again to Thebes, very pleasantly. Our crew were hard-working, good-humoured fellows, full of fun of one kind or another, singing merrily to their oars when the sails could not be used, and their voices sounded mellow and sweet in the choruses. No doubt there is monotony in Nile boat-life, and yet it is very pleasant, and very restful. If I pleased, I could go ashore and have a day's shooting. My crew delighted in acting as beaters, and game was plentiful enough. Frequently we received presents from the chief man of the village—sour milk, the same as in India, live pigeons, vegetables, melons, or anything he thought might be of use to us; and he would beg in return a little English powder for firing, or a pencil, or a little tea. Sometimes I accepted an invitation for the evening, and smoked my pipe and drank coffee with the

village elders, longing always to be able to talk to them without an interpreter.

They were much interested in India, and I had to answer many questions about its people and religion. I enjoyed these homely, but to me very interesting, meetings exceedingly; and I read in after-days, with deep interest, the story of her life in Egypt, so touchingly described by my cousin, Lady Duff Gordon, in her delightful letters, and was able to feel how real and true are her descriptions.

We remained at Thebes, I think, a fortnight, visiting all the places of interest, and especially the ruins of Karnak, where I made many elaborate sketches, now, alas! lost. We crossed the river to the Memnonian Palace, part of which we had swept out for our abode. We were close to the great sitting statues, and could watch them at all times of the day, and in all the changing lights. In the morning and evening nothing can exceed their grim, uncouth grandeur. How they were brought from the quarries, how erected, who can say? One can but look and wonder!

Of course, too, we visited the tombs of the kings. I need not enlarge upon them, or on the

interesting fresco-paintings which illustrate not only the costume and customs of ancient Egypt completely, but also its wars and processions, the employment of the Jews during their captivity in making bricks, helping to drag large building-stones, and the like—the Jewish features being always discernible. The passages were hot and stifling, full of bats, and the smell of the castor-oil lamps almost unendurable; but we persevered, and saw all there was to see, enjoying our return into the cool fresh air afterwards.

“Should we like to have one of the tombs on the hillside above us opened?” asked Abdooallah; “the Arabs were willing, if we wished, to open one for a certain amount of *buksheesh*.”

I agreed at once, and next evening they returned with many curious objects: a chair, perfect except for its rush bottom, which had decayed; a necklace of beads the colour of turquoise; several scarabei, and small blue enamel figures; and best of all, two most elegant terracotta boats, one of which had good, well-modelled figures at stem and stern, and an altar in the centre of the boat, at which a priest was offering. There were also some mummies of ibis, one of a small crocodile, and another which seemed to be a cat. They had likewise picked up a woman's

mummied hand and part of an arm ; the hand was plump and beautiful in shape. The boats, and two of the scarabei, when examined at the British Museum, were found valuable, as they proved the establishment of different kings, filling up gaps in one of the dynasties ; and I received, I think, £47 for them. All the minor articles I gave to Dr Abbott, the famous collector at Cairo, for his museum.

The north wind had moderated very much, and we were anxious now to get on. We stayed a day or two at Keneh with our old host and hostess, who would take no denial. A fantasia of dancing-girls was to come off in my honour : I had never seen one, and was curious to see what the Ali-meh of Egypt were like. Certainly their dancing, or rather posturing, was very strange, some of it both elegant and spirited, as they twisted scarfs about each other, and waved their arms and bodies in time to the music. It had an almost mesmeric effect upon me. Again, nothing could be wilder than some of their rapid movements, appearing to lose all consciousness of self in their ever-varying gestures. Their singing was wild and plaintive by turns, but it did not interest me, as Egyptian music is very monotonous, the chief aim apparently being to produce long,

high, quavering notes, which received due applause from the bystanders. Their costume was rich and good ; far more elegant, as were also their performances, than those of Indian nautch girls. They wore necklaces and bracelets in profusion of what appeared to be gold. I saw nothing indelicate or indecent in what they did during the whole performance.

Laden with gifts from our kind friends, of flour, eggs, semolina, vegetables, sour milk, and fresh bread, we re-entered our boat, and started again down the river. There was not much variety in the scenery, but it was very pleasant, and the tall sails of the Nile boats, both traders and *dahabiehs*, and the towns and villages which we passed, always formed pretty objects in the landscape.

We were still seven days from Cairo when I was attacked with ophthalmia in its worst form. The pain was horrible, and we were very thankful when we reached Cairo, where I was at once taken to the hotel, and put under the care of Dr Abbott, through whose skill, under God's blessing, my eyes were saved ; but he said another day's delay would have been fatal. I was quite blind for some time, and I can never forget the joy and thankfulness I felt when I saw again, though

very dimly, my wife's dear face. With very great care I eventually recovered, but for a long time I appeared to be looking through milk-and-water with opal tints upon it. At Cairo, I was told by the English vice-consul that a long complaint had been laid against me by the owner of the *buggalow* from which I had been delivered at Yembo. I was accused of breach of faith, violence to the Reis of the vessel, and other misdemeanours; and the official was stiff in manner, and far from agreeable. I showed the decision of the Pacha at Yembo, which he forthwith entirely ignored. My copy of the agreement made at Jeddah, and signed by Mr Ogilvie, was, however, very different to the one filed on the plaint and unauthenticated, and my friend began to doubt. "Had I any witnesses?" he asked. I had only my servant and the old Turk, who were desired to proceed next day to the vice-consulate. Their account of the affair simplified the matter very much, and the vice-consul told me they gave evidence in no measured terms, and descriptions of our state which I dare not record; so the question was referred to the consul-general at Alexandria, and I promised to appear when called for. I was not allowed to go out, except with my eyes closely bandaged; but after some time

we were given leave to prepare for our journey. A boat was engaged, and we left Cairo, the scene of so much suffering and so much mercy. As we rode on in the early evening after leaving Boulak, Cairo, with its groves, minarets, and domes, and its lofty citadel, with the rugged hills beyond it, was before us on one side. On the other, date-groves, villages, green fields, and the mysterious Pyramids in the distance, behind which the sun was setting, and a glory of crimson light-tinted clouds hung above them, and spread over the southern and eastern sky, reflected in the broad still river ; and as the sun sank lower, the distance changed to the deepest violet, and at length a still misty grey veiled it from our eyes. What a picture it would have made !

On my arrival at Alexandria I was summoned to the consulate at once, and most courteously received. My affairs were under investigation, and the result was that all my passage-money was returned, and the owner of the *buggalow* fined into the bargain, and threatened as well with the loss of his agency if he ever attempted imposition again.

My cousin, Mr Philip Taylor of Marseilles, was then inspector-in-chief of the "Messageries Royales" steamers, and knowing I was on my way

home, had desired the captain of the steamer then at Alexandria to inquire for me. Finding we had arrived, he very kindly sent off for our baggage, and when we went on board we found the best cabins reserved for us. We had to take leave of our faithful Turk and his wife; the latter clung to my wife, crying, "Take me to England with you!" and refusing all payment. "Why should you ask me to take money?" she said; "I have plenty—my husband has plenty; why should you think of it?"

All I could persuade her to take was one of the Deccan goats. The other I gave to the mistress of the hotel at Alexandria; and when I returned on my way back to India it knew me again, and rubbed its head against me!

Off again,—to Smyrna first, in such luxury as we had long been strangers to—such delicious beds and sofas! such a cook! such excellent wine! and a captain who could never do enough to make us comfortable, and help to pass the time agreeably. We had English and French books on board, chess, piquet, and other games; but my great delight was to lie lazily watching the sea, to feel the delicious climate, and, as they express it in Indian idiom, to *eat* the air.

We ran across from Smyrna to Crete, coasting

along its eastern shore to Syra, where we were to stop; threading our way among the islands before a balmy wind, through the Ægean Sea, now passing barren uninhabited rocks, again fertile islands, all combining to form sea-pictures of surpassing beauty. Leaving Syra, where I did not land, being satisfied with our captain's account of its dirty streets, and strange pyramid of terraced houses, which looked sufficiently picturesque from the sea, we bounded on past more islands, more headlands, those of the south of Italy being very grand; and so to Malta, where we were boarded by the officer of health, and carried away to the gloomy-looking quarantine lazaretto.

Here we had airy rooms, and a *guardiano* appointed to us as our sole attendant. As we had a clean bill of health we thought it very hard, but we had to submit to twenty-one days' detention nevertheless. Our *guardiano*, "Michele," was a merry fellow, and did his best to cheer us.

"Did he know Mrs Austin?" I asked; "and was she still at Malta?"

"Who does not know that kind lady, who is as a mother to us all?" was the reply. "Was I her brother?"

"No, her cousin," I said; "and she will come

and see us when she hears we have arrived ;” and so she did, coming to the Parlatorio, which had a double iron grating, too distant one from the other for us even to shake hands. I told her how we had travelled, and what we had done, and she seemed wonderstruck that we had performed such a journey so well. I also confided to her about my book, ‘The Confessions of a Thug.’ She was about to start for England, and asked me to give her my MS. to look over on her journey. I did so ; but the three volumes were first scored through with knives, then smoked with sulphur till the ink turned pale, and finally delivered to her, by means of a pair of long tongs, through a narrow slit in the grating !

A few books had fortunately been left in our quarters by charitable predecessors ; and with these and bathing, swimming about, within the prescribed limits, our time passed somehow.

At length we were released, and took up our quarters in the town ; but the glare was trying to my eyes, and the heat very great, as it was June, so we were not sorry to leave Malta, and embarked again, passing Etna, then Messina, where we stayed a few hours ; and Stromboli, casting up its red-hot stones into the dark heavens answering Etna, whose illumined pillar of smoke towered

grandly to the sky miles astern. On to Naples, where we were refused permission to land, owing to a dispute about port-dues between the French and Neapolitan Governments. So to Leghorn, and the lovely gulf of Spezia, and all the glorious beauty of the Riviera, till, finally, we arrived at Marseilles on the 3d July, and were met by a hearty welcome from our relations.

One amusing incident occurred. I had two large jars of Indian preserved tobacco, and our captain assured me these would inevitably be confiscated. I had no wish to lose my tobacco, and was determined to pass it if I could. My panther and tiger skins were ruthlessly seized, to my great dismay, and I trembled for the precious jars. I wish I could give the conversation in the original French as it occurred.

"What is this?" asked one of the *douaniers*, politely.

"Oh, taste it," said another. "I daresay it is a preserve."

That gave me my cue.

"Yes, gentlemen," I said, "it is an Indian preserve that I have brought with me. Will you do me the favour to taste it?"

"Is it sweet?" asked one; "it has a strange smell," and he sniffed at the open jar.

“Ah, yes,” said I—“peculiar, no doubt; there are many strange things in India.”

“No doubt, sir—no doubt; but is it sweet?”

“Surely,” said I; “it is prepared with sugar and spices; do try it.”

“Well,” he returned, “here goes,” as he put in his forefinger, and swept out a good lump, which he put into his mouth.

Now if there can be anything more inconceivably nasty to the taste than another, it must be prepared Indian tobacco; and the man, after sucking well at the lump, spat it out upon the floor with a volley of oaths, while the others stood round in fits of laughter.

“You do not seem to like it, sir,” I said, as gravely as I could; “but it was surely sweet?”

“Sweet! yes,” he cried; “the devil’s sweetness! Horrible! horrible! *sacre!* . . . horrible!”

“Perhaps,” said I, looking round, “some other gentleman would like to try it.”

“Is it hot?” said one; “Indian things always burn one’s mouth.”

“There is no pepper whatever in it,” I replied.

“And how do they eat it?” asked another; “is it with bread-and-butter?”

“Well,” I returned, “there are many ways of using it—every one to his taste, you know.”

"Certainly, sir, certainly; every country has its peculiar tastes; may we try it?"

"By all means," I said.

Then there was a rush at the jar, and all put in their fingers and hooked up bits to taste. It was impossible not to laugh, and my cousins fairly roared at the scene that ensued, the *douaniers* spitting, spluttering, swearing, declaring the preserve only fit for the devil to eat, and getting rid of their quids as fast as they could; but one turned his head on one side, and said—

"Do you know, my friends, I rather like it? one would soon grow fond of it. May I take some home to my children?"

"Shut up the jars!" cried the chief, gruffly; "let us have no more of such nonsense! Let them go to the devil! I beg your pardon, monsieur, but the taste will not leave my mouth—like rotten cabbage with sugar on it! Bah! we cannot charge duty on poison like that. Take it away!"

So I carried off my two jars in triumph.

We pushed on after a few days' stay at Marseilles, where for the first time in my life I saw and examined machinery of the highest interest. Mr Philip Taylor had lately embarked in marine engineering work, as well as in the manufacture

of powerful machines for oil-mills and the silk trade, and his comparatively small establishment grew rapidly into a large concern.

We found the journey by diligence to Paris very fatiguing, and probably we suffered more than others from having led such a free open-air life, and the close cramped-up vehicle seemed stifling. However, Paris was reached at length, and after a few days' delay, spent mostly at the glorious Louvre, and also in refreshing our, by this time, very dilapidated wardrobes, we set off again, reaching London at last, after a weary night journey from Dover in the coach.

CHAPTER VI.

1839-40.

I RECEIVED an affectionate welcome from all the members of my family who were in London. I had left them a boy, and had entered on a life which was quite new and strange to them; and I think some were surprised to find I “had the manners of a gentleman,” as one remarked to me, “and did not show traces of contact with the savage tribes of India!” nor could he be persuaded that the people among whom I had been living were highly civilised, and in many ways resembled ourselves. I determined not to speak of India unless I were asked direct questions, or to tell Indian stories, which might not be believed.

Mrs Austin, to whom I had confided my precious MS. at Malta, had been much interested in its perusal, and kindly introduced me to Mr

Bentley, in whose hands I left it ; and to my infinite delight he eventually accepted it, and the agreement was duly executed. Thus one great wish of my life was to be fulfilled. I had hopes, too, of obtaining further literary employment, and as my long journey had been terribly expensive, and my means were slender enough, I looked forward to both pleasure and profit in my work.

I attended the meeting of the British Association held that year at Newcastle-on-Tyne. I exhibited my drawings of Red Sea fish, but as I had no knowledge of ichthyology, I could only explain the localities and circumstances in which I found them. As I have said, I gave them to the Linneæan Society, and was not a little proud when I was elected an honorary member. I paid a visit, too, to my uncle, Mr Prideaux Selby, at Twizell, and was pleased to find the collection of birds and insects I had sent him from India in excellent preservation, and much appreciated by him.

We spent a happy time visiting among my dear mother's relations at Mitford, Twizell, and North Sunderland ; and my book was going slowly through the press. My MS. proved too voluminous : much had to be curtailed and condensed ; a great deal was pronounced really too horrible to

publish; and at last I found it advisable to return to London to see about it. Mr Bentley wrote to me that I must come and hurry it, as "Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen" (to whom Mr Bentley was Publisher in Ordinary) "had directed sheets, as they were revised, to be sent to her—and, having become interested in the work, wished for further supplies as soon as possible."

I worked hard at my proof-sheets, and was very busy. I was asked to write an article for the 'British and Foreign Quarterly,' on "The Disposition of the Native Princes of India towards England" in the event of a protracted struggle in regard to the Affghan war, and I freely confess I was afraid to undertake it. However, I set to work, and did my best, and it was approved of, and, I was told, excited much interest in England, and particular attention on the Continent, and that it was translated into several languages. I founded my article on Major Sutherland's little book upon Native States, which he had written while secretary to Sir Charles Metcalfe, and which I unearthed in the department of the President of the Board of Control, uncut. I referred to my article lately, and among the native states there recorded, some, as Oudh, Nagpore, Satara, and Jhansi, have been annexed to the British domin-

ions, and are now integral portions of its empire of India ; but the remainder exist as they were, the treaties being strengthened by her Majesty's proclamation on the assumption of the government of India by the Crown ; and though some modifications of older treaties have occurred, they in nowise alter those which are recorded in Major Sutherland's work. I received ninety-five guineas as my honorarium for this article, the first money I earned by writing, and I do not think I ever felt prouder or more pleased. In this, and all my undertakings, I have ever had the soundest advice and most steady help from my dear cousin, Henry Reeve, whose faithful love and friendship have never failed me all my life.

I went to see Lord William Bentinck, who was then in London. He received me very kindly ; and I felt more and more, as the intellectual aspect of London society was opening upon me, that, but for his generous interest in me when I was in sore strait, I should never have returned to my native country. He was much interested in the introduction of vernacular education into India, and also of translations of English works ; and he charged me, as I agreed with him, to do my utmost to support the cause in England, and to assist it in India. I never saw him again.

His health was terribly broken, but his interest in these subjects never flagged.

I got back to the north for Christmas. Such cold, as I had long been a stranger to, set in ; and as I could not get further than Manchester by railway, I had to mount the coach, there being no inside seat. Well do I remember that drive, the biting north-east wind, and the keen frost—I sitting by the coachman ; and at last, when he could hold out no longer, I took the reins ; and I believe the excitement of driving the “wild teams,” as the coachman called them, kept me up, for I had never felt such cold before. At every stage we found hot tea ready ; and if possible every team was wilder than the one before ; but we drove in turn : and when, on reaching Leeds, I tendered my half-crown, the man would not take it. “No, no, sir ; not a penny from a gent’man as helped a fellow like me to get through such a night ! If it hadn’t a bin for you w’d ha’ been on top of Blackstone Edge a-lyin’ in the snow, for I couldn’t a-drivin ye !” And I assure you I felt proud of the good fellow’s hearty commendation.

The year that was expiring had been very memorable to me. When I reflected on the great distance we had safely traversed, the variety

and interest of the scenes we had witnessed, the merciful protection we had enjoyed, my recovery from long and severe illness, and the restoration of my sight—my heart was lifted up in thankfulness to the Almighty Giver of all these mercies. Besides, there was the reunion with my family : all had received me with open arms. A few dear faces were missing, certainly—one I never ceased to mourn, who would have shared my pleasures and my troubles, and whose loving sympathy was always ready for her boy ; but my life was a very happy one, and the dawning hope of literary employment, however humble, was very precious to me.

Returning to London in spring, I found my book, ‘The Confessions,’ had been received with much greater interest and success than I had ever ventured to hope for ; and not only did the London papers and periodicals take it up, but the provincial press teemed with flattering reviews and long extracts from it. It was curious to hear people wondering over the book and discussing it ; and evidently the subject was a new sensation to the public. It passed rapidly through the first edition, and a second was in preparation. I was asked also to write another book, which should take the place of an historical novel, and

become the forerunner of a series of such Indian works, and Tippoo Sultan was chosen as the subject. I remonstrated, as I considered the theme too recent; and what could I make out of it? To be sure, I had travelled through Mysore, and could describe local scenery and objects, but I fairly despaired of making a readable story out of Tippoo. But my publishers were not to be convinced, and I promised to do my best.

I required some information in regard to points in the Duke of Wellington's transactions with the family of Tippoo Sultan, and I wrote to him asking him to be so good as to help me. To this request I received a short and very characteristic reply, written on a scrap of foolscap paper, dated from the House of Lords.

"The Duke of Wellington is too busy at present to answer Captain Taylor's note; but if he will attend at Apsley House to-morrow at eleven, the Duke will endeavour to remember what Captain Taylor requires."

The note was the merest scrawl, but was precious to me in remembrance of the very courteous interview that followed. His memory was perfectly clear, and he had forgotten nothing in regard to his own part in the first Mahratta war.

He told me ‘The Confessions’ had fairly taken him back to India.

I spent the summer in Ireland, principally at the dear old house at Harold’s Cross, in which I now reside. We travelled, too, to Killarney and Limerick, and visited my father, who was then living in the Co. Clare.

On our way, I had the strangest speech made to me by an old beggar-woman that I think I ever heard, even in Ireland. As we drew up at Naas, the usual clamour for charity began. I was on the box-seat, wrapped up in a coat bordered with fur, and doubtless looked very cosy.

One of the old women called out—

“Ah, thin, comfortable gintleman, throw us a copper!”

I was dubbed “comfortable gintleman” by the crowd till I could no longer resist, so I threw down a shilling to be divided. On this my old friend dropped on her knees in the mud, and raising her clasped hands, cried—

“Ah, thin, that yer honour might be in heaven this night, sittin’ wid the blessed Vargin Mary upon a binch!”

At Killarney we fairly bothered the beggars by speaking to them in Hindostanee, and thereby escaped importunity.

“Hasn’t he moustaches?” said one. “He is a furriner. What’s the good o’ axing the likes of him? Bad cess to him.”

In spring I went to London again, having devoted the winter to the writing of my new book, and to enjoying Dublin hospitalities.

I had the *entrée* into much delightful society in London, and became acquainted with many distinguished characters.

Lady Morgan was insatiable about Indian stories, and I had to invent or improvise when my memory failed me. At her house we had rich treats in music, Moscheles, Liszt, and others frequenting her rooms constantly, besides many gifted amateurs.

I was free of Gore House too, and look upon the evenings spent there as among the pleasantest reminiscences of that period.

It was most interesting and fascinating to me to meet so many men of note under such charming auspices as those of Lady Blessington. Most of these now, perhaps, are gone to their rest, and there is no need to mention names. Does any one remember the strange, almost “eerie” speech that Prince Louis Napoleon made one evening there, when, leaning his elbow on the mantelpiece, he began an oration declaring the policy he should

adopt when he became Emperor of the French? And I remember too, when this really happened, how his actions actually accorded with that strange speech. When Lady Blessington rallied him good-naturedly on what he had said, he put his hand on his heart, bowed gravely, and told her that he was never more in earnest in his life, and that she would understand it all by-and-by. Maclise and I walked home together, and could speak of nothing else.

As I came to know Prince Louis Napoleon better, he proposed to me to join him in a tour through India which he contemplated, taking with him Count D'Orsay. He was to apply for my services as long as he required them, and the plan appeared delightful.

I heard from him direct, after I had returned to India, asking for information on various points of equipment, &c. ; but the Boulogne affair and what followed put an end to the whole scheme, to my infinite regret.

I remember, too, another very interesting evening at Gore House, when I was presented to the son of the great Russian Minister, Count Nesselrode. He had been specially sent over to glean intelligence of the English designs in Asia, and he set himself steadily to pick my brains on

all sorts of Indian subjects. He was, or affected to be, surprised at my account of the number, discipline, and equipment of the native army in India, of the condition of the cavalry and artillery, and especially when I told him that I should not hesitate to put my own regiment of native infantry in brigade with H.M. Guards, and that they would work with them as well and as effectively as any regiment of the line.

I was complimented afterwards by several present on having spoken out some very home truths fearlessly, and I hope they were of use. That night La Blache and Tamburini sang by turns, and imitated the singing of Grisi and Persiani, in the most surprising way, in falsetto, quarrelling over it very amusingly. But I may not linger over these memories, which few who shared them could have forgotten. It was to be my last season of such society for many a long year, and I prized it accordingly.

I pass over the intervening time which we spent in farewell visits among our friends and relatives, and we left London in November, on our return to India.

I had attended the last *levée* of the season, "on departure for India," and as I knelt to kiss her Majesty's hand, she said to me very gra-

ciously, "I wish you a safe voyage, and trust I may see you again." And so she did, exactly twenty years later.

Back again, through Paris and Marseilles, from Malta to Alexandria and Cairo, and so to Suez, down the Red Sea, always hot and uncomfortable, and we were glad at last to reach Bombay early in January, after our long absence.

We sent on our luggage on carts to Poona, and ourselves started, just as I had done seventeen years before, on my first journey to Aurungabad to begin life.

How was I to go on? Was I to rejoin my regiment, and continue its dull routine of duties, or was a fresh career before me? My mind was filled with speculations on these and many other points.

I need not go over again my old route to Poona, where we did not stay long, but went on to Sholapoor. All along the route I found luxuriant and continuous cultivation, instead of the waste land and deserted villages of 1824. The original survey operations had been improved, the assessments had been reduced and arranged on a proper valuation of the land, and the change in the aspect of the country was as remarkable as it was beneficial. The early millet and pulse of the

first crop of the season had been reaped on the uplands, but in the lower ground the later millet and wheat were fast ripening, and the sheets of golden grain were truly beautiful. All over the upland stubbles were large flocks of ortolans, of which I shot numbers, affording us delicious eating; and every afternoon I rambled out with my gun, and seldom failed to bring in a bag of hares, quails, and partridges.

It was a most enjoyable journey throughout. We had a very pleasant party of fellow-travellers: a lady and her family, who came with us from Bombay on her way to join her husband; and the children were charming companions, boys and girls both accompanying me in my rides, mounted on stout ponies, and scrambling all over the country. The only uncomfortable member of the party, I believe, was their tutor, a Frenchman, who found the people barbarians, the country barbarous, and the language worse. Above all, there were no hotels, no wayside inn, even, where one could procure a cup of coffee. His chief delight was to come out with me, and see partridges and quails shot *flying*.

We reached Sholapoor in due course, and found tents sent for us by Mr Palmer. We halted there for two or three days, and then pur-

sued our march by the Nuldroog and Hominabad road, through my old district of 1827-29. From Sholapoor to Hyderabad in those days there was, strictly speaking, no road, only a track; but I knew every mile thoroughly, and that I could obtain assistance everywhere if it were required.

The tents were very comfortable; the children, and even Monsieur, were enchanted: they were lined with pretty chintz and carpeted, and had double walls and roofs to keep off the sun, and were a luxury we had not expected.

I received a perfect ovation through my old district, and it was very gratifying to find I had not been forgotten. At Nuldroog, where we halted a day or two, the townspeople visited me in great numbers; and both from the Nawab's agent in the fort, and from the zemindars, came presents of provisions, trays of sweetmeats, barley-sugar, and almonds, not only for ourselves, but for all my servants and followers. At every village, as we entered it, the authorities came out to meet us with jars of milk, baskets of eggs, and humble offerings of flowers, while the piper played us past the village.

At one resting-place, parties of women came to visit my wife, and tell her stories of me, and how

“at first they used to be afraid of the gentleman with the ‘red trousers;’ but he had done them no harm, and the country was not so quiet now as when he had been with them,” and more that was pleasant to me to hear.

At Hominabad, in particular, the welcome given to me was on a great scale; all the merchants and others assembled about half a mile from the town headed by my old friend Atma-ram, the dean of guild; and there were baskets of flowers, sweetmeats, and fruits, which I had to accept. The town pipers and drummers played us to our tents; provisions were provided for all the party; and in the afternoon crowds came to visit me, and have a talk over old times in their simple, homely fashion.

They were very curious about England, and I had to recount all my doings since I had left them. My wife, also, had her assembly of women; and told me afterwards, with tears in her eyes, how precious it was to her to hear how these people really loved me, and wanted me to come back to them.

Next day we proceeded to Ekali, where it may be remembered I had marched after the insurgent rebel before-mentioned. He was still confined at Hyderabad, and had been fined heavily; but was

said to have become a reformed character, and to have grown very humble and religious.

At Sudasheopett, my old residence, I had another similar ovation; but my little bungalow had been removed, and a larger one built for the accommodation of travellers, and I was rather sorry not to see it again.

On the 26th February we arrived at Hyderabad, having been just a month on the road; and Mr Palmer was overjoyed to see us again. I put a copy of my new book, 'Tippoo Sultan,' into his hands, and in some respects he liked it better almost than 'The Confessions.' He told me that nearly every one doubted my really being the author of 'The Confessions;' and said it was fortunate that I had sent him the work in manuscript as I did, so that he could assure all sceptics that he had read it in my handwriting before I had left India, thus ending all discussion.

General J. S. Fraser had succeeded Colonel Stewart as Resident at Hyderabad, and received me most cordially, recommending me very earnestly to pursue my literary work, and prophesying that I should find ample occupation for my pen.

My regiment, the 6th, was at Bolarum, and the men and officers came to see me in numbers, and

to welcome me back again ; but General Fraser was making other arrangements for me. I was to go to Hingolee to take command of the 8th, whose commandant had gone on furlough to Europe. It was a long march in the hot weather ; but orders had to be obeyed, and we started on the 13th March, making as long stages as we could.

During our stay at Hyderabad, the festival of the Mohurram had occurred ; and I was gratified to find that my description in the 'Thug,' although written from memory, was correct in every particular, yet hardly giving an idea of the grandeur of the scene.

One sore disappointment awaited me. I had hoped that my little savings, upon which I had not drawn during my absence in England, would have increased materially ; instead of this, all had been swept away, with a very small hope of recovery, and I had to begin afresh. Had I died then, my dear wife and child would have been left penniless ; but God was merciful to me in all things. Before I left Hyderabad, General Fraser warned me to make no arrangements to reside at Hingolee, as I might be sent on to Ellichpoor to act as staff-officer and paymaster. And so it proved. We again marched on the 19th April, and reached our destination safely. Since our

departure from Bombay we had travelled very nearly seven hundred miles, and we were truly thankful to be at rest, and with a delicious climate to live in. The brigadier had the privilege of residing at Chiculdah, upwards of 4000 feet above the sea, where there was no heat, and the nights and mornings were almost cold. My eyes, which had suffered much from our march in the heat and glare, now improved rapidly; and I would fain have remained at Chiculdah during the monsoon; but as soon as the rains set in, the brigadier and the doctor moved into cantonments, and we were forced to follow.

I then began a new book, but my eyes proved too weak for writing, and I was obliged to give it up. I could paint better, and amused myself by taking portraits of my friends.

I managed, however, to send an article to England on "Educational Measures for the People of India," which was called forth by a controversy then raging between the Arabic, Persian, and Sanscrit party, and the English and vernacular, whose cause I espoused, not only in the Indian press, but in my letters for the 'Times,' which were then regularly sent by every mail. My advocacy of their measures did not slacken until they were finally adjusted; for the practical

benefit to the people by their adoption far exceeded what might be looked for from the ancient system and languages so ardently insisted upon by Wilson and others.

I need not now enter into the particulars—they are matters of history, and out of date; but I have never regretted the part I took in this discussion when I see the noble results which have been already attained, and are rapidly advancing year by year, all over India, in all its regions, and in all its vernacular languages.

At the latter end of October my tenure of staff employment came to an end, and I was ordered to rejoin the 8th Regiment at Hingolee. A pretender to the person and claims of Appa Sahib, the ex-Rajah of Nagpore, who had escaped from custody after the Mahratta war of 1818, had arisen in rebellion in the Nagpore district, and, joined by bodies of Rohillas and others, was plundering where he could. The 8th Regiment was already in the field, and I was directed to join it without delay. So I started through a wild and almost depopulated, but very beautiful, tract of country, and in a few days came up with the regiment. The campaign, however, was concluded by Captain Johnston's capture of Appa Sahib, after a truly surprising march of 78 miles in 32 hours.

Another brilliant attack was made on a party of Rohillas by Brigadier Twemlow, at the head of a detachment of cavalry : 150 of the enemy were left dead upon the field, and the rest captured ; the cavalry lost eight killed and wounded only. This was a truly gallant affair, for the Rohillas (Affghans) are well known for their bravery, and for good use of their weapons.

My contributions to the 'Times' were apparently liked, for I heard at this time that I had been appointed "Special Correspondent," on a yearly stipend ; and this honour I continued to enjoy for many years.

Events in India were deeply interesting at this period ; the miserable retreat from Cabul, the failure of Lord Auckland's Affghanistan policy, and the safety and relief of Sale's brigade, were universal subjects of interest and speculation. Before I left Ireland I had become acquainted with Lord Fitzgerald and Vesci, and was honoured by his friendship, while I supplied him with all the information he needed, as far as my experience carried me. I had now become his regular correspondent, and so continued as long as he held office as President of the Board of Control, and by him I was strongly recommended to Lord Ellenborough, the successor of

Lord Auckland. Although Lord Auckland had not been able to give me permanent employment, or transfer me to the cavalry in the absence of vacancies, yet he had, since my introduction to him by Lady Blessington, shown a very kind solicitude respecting me and my advancement, which, had he remained in office, would probably have been attended with good results. Now I had to look to Lord Ellenborough, to whom I sent Lord Fitzgerald's letter of introduction, and I was much gratified by receiving an autograph letter from him in reply, which showed more knowledge of my doings hitherto than I anticipated, and contained kind expressions of goodwill.

Shortly after I joined the 8th Regiment I had occasion to return to Hyderabad, and there was appointed to do duty with the 4th Regiment stationed at Bolarum, where I took a house, and for some months we led quiet and happy lives. The weather was delicious, and we had some pleasant parties to Golcondah, where we entertained our friends. Although the country is bare of trees, the locality of the Kings' Tombs presents many picturesque features. The noble mausoleums themselves, the grim old fort and its massive walls, the city of Hyderabad in the distance, and several large lakes or tanks sparkling

in the sun, contribute to form one of the most striking views in the Deccan. After Golcondah we all assembled near the tomb of Boorhani Sahib, on the east of the city, the Nizam's deer-preserve, where, as I had permission, several fine bucks were shot.

Here, on the 23d November, just as I had ridden in from Secunderabad, I received a note from General Fraser desiring me to come to him at once, as he had something important to communicate ; so I rode in to breakfast, after which we entered on the business for which he had sent for me.

CHAPTER VII.

1841-42.

I HAD been aware that an officer of cavalry, a very accomplished and able man, had been employed as Political Agent at Shorapoor for more than a year in adjusting affairs at issue between that State and the Government of H.H. the Nizam, in pursuance of Act 17 of the Treaty of 1800 between the British Government and the Nizam, which stipulated for interference between the Nizam and Shorapoor in case of the latter withholding payment of tribute and just claims due to the former.

The original tribute had been comparatively low ; but the Nizam's Government had increased it on various pretences, and on the succession of the late Rajah, who had very recently died, a Nuzzerana, or succession fee, of fifteen lakhs (£150,000) had been exacted by the Nizam's Minister, which was to be liquidated by instalments.

These demands led to many complications, in which the British Government had always been obliged, under pressure of the treaty, to take a part. Money had been borrowed from local bankers under the signature of British officers to pay instalments of tribute and succession fees, which the impoverished State could not meet; and there were disputes between the Shorapoor State and the bankers, the bankers and the Nizam's Government, which altogether presented a very complicated and eminently disagreeable state of affairs.

The officer in charge had just concluded a proposed settlement of all these matters, and had submitted an exhaustive report on the country and its revenues and resources, when the Rajah, Krishnappa Naik, died suddenly, and his elder Ranee, Ishwarama, assumed the administration as regent to her son, a boy of seven years old or thereabouts.

The Ranee was a woman of much energy and cleverness, but she was dissolute to a degree—in fact a very Messalina, and hardly second to the famous Maha Ranee of the Punjaub. Her infidelities were known to her husband and his family, but could not be checked. On the death of her husband she defied all parties, resisted the

settlements made by Captain Gresley, and called out the military forces of the country, about ten thousand men, whom she rallied round her, inducing the leaders to promise to support her on oath.

The late Rajah's family, who headed a strong party in the State, had declared themselves opposed to the Ranee because of her infamous character; and acting according to their declaration, the late Rajah's brother, by name Pid Naik, had been proposed as regent during his nephew's minority, an arrangement which was ratified by the Governor-General in Council. This measure, however, had been violently resisted by the Ranee, and she defied her brother-in-law and the British Government alike.

Affairs having reached this point, and Captain Gresley having no disposition to temporise, he applied for a force to disperse the adherents of the Ranee, to establish Pid Naik in office, and to assist him generally to carry out the measures he had proposed, and which had received sanction.

General Fraser, however, did not consider an exhibition of force necessary, nor had he, he thought, a sufficient number of troops at his disposal to render it sufficiently imposing. Our army was then evacuating Affghanistan, and there

was no security in the Punjaub after the death of Maharajah Runjeet Singh. Troops from the southward had been marched northwards, a measure which had caused outbreaks of mutiny in some corps of the Madras army ; and while the movement across the Punjaub was in progress, it was felt that any outbreak of war elsewhere might be only as a spark to a magazine of general treason, which might explode with fearful consequences.

When the assistance of a force was denied him, the political officer reported that he could do no more than he had done ; that the position of the Rance was growing stronger ; and that if she were supported by Arabs, Rohillas, and other mercenaries whom she had funds to maintain, the result would be a costly and bloody little war, always to be deprecated.

He had already been able, by seizing the ferry-boats on the Bheema and Krishna rivers, to prevent the crossing of those mercenaries ; but the rivers would now soon be fordable, and no security would then exist. He therefore begged to tender his resignation, and to be relieved without delay.

“ Will you take up this matter, Taylor ? ” asked General Fraser of me. “ If you succeed, it will be a good thing for you, and you are at any rate

independent. I cannot spare any other officer just now on whom I could rely."

I saw it was a very, very difficult matter—one in which a very able man had failed; but it was a chance of political employment, for which I longed; and I was confident in myself, and knew that if I should be so fortunate as to succeed, Government would be obliged to me. So I accepted the offer at once, and said I would do my best to bring the refractory lady to terms. No doubt I was rash, but I could but do my best, and did not anticipate a long absence.

I went at once to Secunderabad, packed up what things I required, took my tents, and marched the following morning to Hyderabad. I employed the next day in reading up the very voluminous papers connected with the case, and afterwards again visited the Resident to have a final consultation. He explained his intended line of policy, which was to abstain from using force as long as negotiation could be carried on, and the interest of the Government secured; that, in fact, he had no available troops till the regiments now on their march should reach Hyderabad; and then, if necessary, he would support me with four regiments.

I started alone the following morning, and on

the fourth day reached Muktul, a distance of 120 miles.

On my way to Shorapoor I went to Captain Gresley's camp, and heard from him an entire exposition of his transactions with Shorapoor from first to last. He told me that the Ranee's paramour, a man named Chun Busappa, was now paramount; that Pid Naik was in dread of his life; that the Ranee was insolent and confident to the last degree; that she knew of the British reverses in Affghanistan; and that her astrologers were filling her mind with the most absurd stories of the evacuation of India by the English.

"I have twice failed in my negotiations with this woman," said my old friend, "and I could not humiliate either myself or the British Government by trying a third fall with her. You are a new hand, and may be more successful; but I advise you to be very cautious, for no one is to be trusted in Shorapoor, where the people, though outwardly civil enough, are at heart treacherous savages, and you would not be safe among them."

This was not encouraging. I remained two days with my friend; but the more I heard and the more I considered, the more the business seemed hopelessly involved. His views were convincing enough. He maintained that had he

been at first supported by a regiment, with other forces at hand in case of need, all would have been arranged quietly without firing a shot; but he was quite hopeless of my success now, as more mercenaries had already joined the Ranee, and the Beydur militia were at her entire command.

He showed me, too, a letter from Colonel Tomkyns, part of which ran thus—

“If Taylor settles this matter without troops, he will be a cleverer fellow than I take him for!”

Not flattering, certainly, but quite enough to put me on my mettle, and I had formed a little plan of my own which I longed to test.

Next day I was at Shorapoor.

It was a grim place to look at, certainly: a mass of granite mountains rising abruptly out of the plain, and though apparently several miles long, had no connection with any other range.

To the north, a second line of lower rocky hills ran parallel to Shorapoor, and a flat valley about a mile or mile and a half wide lay between. The Shorapoor hills were masses of granite, whose denuded tops appeared in strange *tors*, and piles of rocks exceeding in magnitude any I had before seen. There was no appearance of a city.

My tents were pitched in a pleasant tamarind-grove close to a suburb, and I was told that the

town was over the brow of the hill before us, and lay in a hollow between the highest part of the range to the east, and a somewhat lower portion to the west. I found two companies of my old regiment, the 6th, and a few cavalry, as my escort.

About mid-day I was visited by Rajah Pid Naik, who brought his nephew, the little prince, with him, several members of his own and the Ranee's family, and a banker named Luchman-geer, a Gosain ; and I read out the letter from General Fraser, which announced my mission, and in which he hoped that the measures of Government would be adopted without further delay, and recommended all parties to sink their differences in the common good of the State. I then warned them of the fate of many other States which had from time to time rejected and opposed the Government, and had perished under their own eyes, and entreated them not to be overconfident, but to be very careful.

The Ranee's brother formed one of the audience, and seemed very attentive. I told him that, as Pid Naik had been selected by Government, no other could be admitted as regent ; and after the warnings Captain Gresley and I had both given, any opposition to these orders would be con-

sidered rebellion, and without doubt would be dealt with as such.

I could see, however, that Pid Naik had no party, and that to set him up and pull the others down was almost a desperate matter, and I nearly inclined to Captain Gresley's opinion that force would be necessary. I requested that all the officers of the State troops, and the heads of the Beydur clans, might be sent to me next day, that I might explain to them the views of Government; and to my surprise they came to a man—about a hundred of as wild-looking fellows as I ever saw—and were introduced to me one by one, by one of the State officers. Pid Naik stayed away, and I was glad he did not come.

I spoke to them for some time. A few grew violent, and swore they would acknowledge no authority but the Ranee's, and would fight for her and Chun Busappa to the death. Others were quiet, and, I thought, determined; and some appeared irresolute. I had done enough for that day, and dismissed the whole assembly with the ceremonious gifts of *atr*, and betel-leaf, and a garland of flowers.

"You treat us with respect," said one of the jemadars or officers, "and we thank you for it."

"I always treat my friends with the respect I

hope to receive myself," I replied ; and I believe this simple act of courtesy at least softened many.

Next day I went to return the visit of the little Rajah, and to submit my demands to his mother.

If I had listened to all the warnings I received, I should never have ventured at all. Many, I was told, had vowed to make an end of me : the town was full of the Beydur militia, who had sworn to turn me out of Shorapoor, and the like.

I had to ascend by a roughly-paved road, about 400 feet, into the city, which appeared well built and well populated, lying between portions of the rocky range which varied from 400 to 500 feet in height. Being completely screened from without, it seemed, as it had been described to me, a very stronghold of freebooters.

I was politely received in the outer court of the palace by the little Rajah, where a great crowd of armed men were assembled, and then led into another court, and through a passage into a third, well built of red brick, and of two storeys. It contained two open halls, neatly covered with white cotton cloths, with large pillars at intervals. The little Rajah, who was a delicate-looking though cheerful boy, was by no means disconcerted, and asked me many questions pleas-

antly, and at last invited me to come and see his mother.

She was in the next room, and sat at the door behind a bamboo screen—through which, however, she could see me, though I could not see her. She spoke neither Hindostanee nor Mah-ratta; but I had a good interpreter in one of the members of the family, who had been at Hyderabad, and was quite a gentleman. For a time she spoke very pleasantly, and the little Rajah had, of his own accord, come to me, and was sitting in my lap. “See,” said the Ranee, “my son has gone to you, as he never did to his father, and now you must be father to us all.”

This speech led the way to business; and when I told her it would be far from wise to pull her own house about her ears as she seemed to be doing, she replied, in the most innocent manner possible, “That she was quite unaware of having offended any one, and could only look to the British Government to protect her and her son, as it had already done for several generations.”

We talked for four hours without ceasing, and at last I handed her a paper, in which I had embodied my demands.

1st, To give an account of the revenue for the last three years.

2d, To give over the Rajah's seal of office.

3d, To make over all the armed men to Pid Naik.

This sadly bothered her, and she was as slippery as an eel; but it would not do. I said I would not leave her till I had her determination from her own mouth; for I had no faith in letters or messages, and I doggedly kept my seat.

This did good: for, though arguing bravely, the Ranee was driven from her positions, one by one, and at last agreed to all my demands. Would she keep to her word? That remained to be seen. The only objection which I thought was a reasonable one was about the seal, which, being the Rajah's, could not be used by his Minister; but, as she suggested, a seal of regency might be engraved and used. After this interview was over, I walked to Pid Naik's house through the crowd outside, and saw his three fine boys and two girls, while his wife sent me a kind message. He appeared more hopeful, and thought we were getting on.

Next day the leaders of all the armed men came to me again by appointment, and I requested they would at once give me agreements to serve Pid Naik and not the Ranee. How I had to argue and coax by turns, I can hardly

describe ; but at last one came over to me, then another and another ; but some remained unconvinced and went away.

I then wrote to the Rancee ; and, after a day's intermediate delay, she sent me about 400 men—those on whom she could least rely—and I made them over at once to Pid Naik. The Rancee now began to see that she must either come down quietly or be pulled down, and in two days more I had secured 600 men. But still I was not satisfied.

The Beydurs had not come to me, and I was very anxious about them, as they were the representatives of the 12,000 militia, and the Rajah's body-guard, on whom the Rancee had lavished much money. I also had much anxiety respecting the garrison of Wondroog—a very strong fort, about ten miles off, in which there were 300 picked men. On the seventh day after my arrival I had secured 1400 men in all. The last 700 were Beydurs, as fine and bold a set of fellows as ever were seen, well armed with sword, shield, and matchlock.

“Tell us,” cried their leader, “are you going to make Pid Naik Rajah ?”

“By no means,” I replied. “He will only be Minister. Your little Rajah is my son, and I will

put him on his throne with my own hands before I go."

"And you give us your word about this?" they asked.

"Certainly I do," I cried, "and the word of the British Government."

"Enough!" was the general shout. "And now put your hands on our heads, and we will be your obedient children henceforth."

Then they crowded round me, and I placed my hands on a number of heads, many prostrating themselves before me, some weeping, and all much excited.

I had sent for baskets full of wreaths of flowers and betel-leaves, and I gave each of the leaders a garland, hanging it about their necks myself, while my attendants distributed the same to the others. As they filed down before me, each division gave me a hearty cheer: "Jey Mahadeo Baba!"—the old cry of Golcondah! How had they learned it? I confess it moved me deeply.

No fear now, thought I; and I was right, though there were some trials yet to undergo. All these men were sadly in arrears, and I took up money sufficient to give to each two months' pay. I did this solely on my own responsibility;

but I saw the necessity, and felt sure I would be supported by General Fraser.

That evening they went of their own accord and made salaam to Pid Naik, who could hardly believe his senses when he saw them. The day after, all the horsemen of the State came to me. They had Chun Busappa in their charge to protect him from me, but promised obedience like the rest. I saw it was the time to demand him at their hands. To this most of them demurred, as they were on oath to the Ranee; but they said, "Though as a point of honour they could not give him up, yet they would have nothing more to do with him."

Next day the Ranee's agent came to try to get a promise of probation for Chun Busappa; but he found me utterly obdurate, and I suppose he went and told him it was no use resisting, for in the afternoon Chun Busappa himself came to me alone, and threw himself at my feet, making no conditions. "He had now no protector from his enemies," he said, "and submitted himself to me to be dealt with as I pleased."

I quote here the following passage taken from one of my letters to my father :—

"I hear the Lady is very sore, and I hope she is. There is a long account to settle with both

—that is, with the Ranee and Chun Busappa. They owe the Nizam's Government two lakhs, arrears of tribute which I must get; and they have paid none of the bankers whose instalments are in arrear. It will be no easy matter to get this money; but patience will do a great deal, and as yet no force has been used. Collectors have been sent into the districts to collect the revenue now due, and to establish Pid Naik's government; and I have only to hope all may go on quietly. Besides the papers to Pid Naik, I have taken others from all the mercenaries and the Beydurs, in the name of the British and Nizam's Governments, pledging themselves to obedience and allegiance, on pain of punishment, if they go in opposition to the future management of the State.

"I have already found out that four days after the Ranee had reported to the Resident that she had made over the Government to Pid Naik, she bound down all the Beydurs by oath, and many others, not to obey him, but to stand by her; and if she could have been joined by the Arabs and Rohillas, which Captain Gresley's vigilance alone prevented, she would have caused the Government of India much anxiety."

I had now been at work ten days, and hard, anxious work it was.

So far, I had carried all my measures. My proceedings were entirely approved of, and I received the following official letter from the Resident on the 22d December, after my report had reached him :—

“These despatches demand from me nothing further than the expression of my entire approbation of the temper, judgment, and firmness which you are now exhibiting in the discharge of the duty intrusted to you; and it will be very gratifying to me to state to the Supreme Government, that under your judicious management the affairs of the Shorapoor State may be arranged in a satisfactory manner, and without the necessity of having recourse to arms. . . . Nothing remains to me but to transmit to you my entire and unqualified approbation of all your proceedings.” (Signed) “J. S. FRASER, *Res’t.*”

Captain Gresley also wrote from Muktul—

“You have managed admirably, and deserve very great credit. I could never have done the thing so well. General Fraser ought to be much obliged to you.”

These letters were very gratifying and encouraging; but the following, which the general was so good as to write to my wife, was even more so :

“MY DEAR MRS TAYLOR,—I cannot resist the pleasure of telling you, because I am sure it will give you pleasure, that I have received three despatches from my *chargé d'affaires*, your good husband, at Shorapoor, and that he is succeeding admirably in the duty intrusted to him—even getting the better of a lady!—the Ranee Ishwar-ama—which of all diplomatic transactions is probably the most difficult.

“He has exhibited the most perfect temper, tact, and judgment, and I have been delighted to express my entire and unqualified approbation of the whole of his proceedings.

“The requisite communication has also, of course, been made to the Governor-General, and it gratifies me to think the despatches must equally meet the approval of this higher authority.—Very faithfully yours,

“J. S. FRASER.”

And the following extract from a letter from the Secretary of Government followed very shortly afterwards:—

“The Governor-General directs me to express the great satisfaction with which he has perused these reports, and his entire concurrence in the just approbation you have bestowed upon the

temper, judgment, and firmness evinced by Captain Taylor in the several transactions he has detailed."

(Signed) "T. EDWARDS, *Assist. Secy.*"

In addition to the above, I had almost daily private letters from the general, which were very encouraging ; but I have kept no copies of them, nor, indeed, are they needed here.

I had not, however, by any means, done with the Ranee yet. After my first flush of success, her party again assumed formidable dimensions, and I feared might incite her to fresh opposition. I had only myself to rely upon, for Pid Naik was utterly useless and helpless. I did not relax in any of the demands which I had made, for which the Ranee alone was responsible, having collected the revenue for many years ; and finding I would not give in, she sent to me to say she was preparing bills for a lakh of rupees.

These were, however, so long in making their appearance, and there were so many evasions and excuses for which I could not account, that I grew more suspicious, and discovered at length that Chun Busappa, who was in my camp under surveillance, was sending the Ranee private messages to delay ; that I "should soon be turned out,

as Captain Gresley had been, and that I had no force at hand to use in case of resistance."

At last the Lady sent the banker to me with an impudent message, to the effect that if Chun Busappa were released unconditionally by me, and if she were allowed to have her own way in the direction of affairs, she would then pay the lakh of rupees.

This was displaying the cloven foot with a vengeance, and it was evident that so long as Chun Busappa remained, these secret intrigues would go on. I heard, too, that she was endeavouring to incite some of the 12,000 Beydur militia to attack my camp and rescue her paramour, and my men had noticed a great number of them prowling about, and posted on the hillsides at night. I therefore determined to send Chun Busappa at once to Linsoogoor, the cantonment of the south, where he would be quite safe and kept out of mischief. One of my *chuprassies* or messengers knew the road perfectly, and the Krishna river was fordable.

Twenty-five of my cavalry were therefore ordered to prepare for a night march; and about nine o'clock, when all was quiet, I went to Chun Busappa, and told him he had forfeited his word, and was leading his mistress into fresh trouble.

He did not deny the charge, but confessed the Ranee had sent him word that she would rescue him. I told him I had likewise heard the same, and that he must gird up his loins at once and mount the horse that awaited him.

In five minutes more he was on his road, guarded by the cavalry escort, and reached Linsogoor the following morning in safety.

Long afterwards this man thanked me, with tears in his eyes, for having saved him, and the Ranee too, from much evil—perhaps even from death; and told me, also, how narrowly I had escaped myself. If I had not been very vigilant, I would have been attacked by clans of the 12,000 whom I had not seen. I wrote to my father thus:—

“Great was the indignation and consternation of the Lady in the morning. She beat her head, and, as it was reported to me, knocked it against the wall, roared and cried, and then, in a violent passion, rushed into the outer court of her palace, and called upon all good men and true to help her to get Chun Busappa back again. This was the crisis that I expected, and upon it would turn everything, hostile or peaceable. But nobody stirred. Only six negro slaves loaded their guns, and threatened everybody; but, being threatened

by others, quietly fired them off, and were placed under surveillance.

“Well, my lady then was down on her marrow-bones for a few days, and my humble servant. She had her palankeen prepared to come and see me, which, I declared, without my wife’s presence, would be indecent. Then began a series of sorrowful letters, with presents of partridges and quail, fruit and vegetables ; but it would not do : I must have my lakh of rupees ; and it came in two days in bills, which I very gladly despatched to Hyderabad.”

I now determined to discharge certain of the mercenaries ; and in consequence of the Ranee’s obstinacy about the money transactions, the Resident thought it would be too hazardous to attempt the measure without some backing up. The 26th Regiment, Madras Infantry, which was on its march to Secunderabad, was therefore ordered to make a diversion to Shorapoor, and to await my orders. In reality I did not want the regiment ; but the Resident was more cautious than I, and thought prevention better than cure. I had no trouble with the mercenaries. Those who were needed for ordinary duty were retained ; superfluous men discharged, their arrears for four years being paid to them according to their amounts.

I thought the garrison of Wondroog were inclined to be restive, but the men all came into camp, a very fine set of fellows ; and when I had inspected them, looked at their arms, and complimented them on their steadiness, I called for volunteers for a hog-hunt, and I think more than half the men responded at once : so we started, the officers of the 26th Regiment joining heartily, and showed them good sport before we returned.

Another very anxious crisis thus passed over ; but the Ranee said she had no more money, though her own accounts showed she had more in hand than the 75,000 rupees I had asked for, and I told her that I had no alternative but to attach her private estates if she remained obstinate ; and at last I did so by sending small parties of cavalry into her villages, and this so completely humbled her, that, in consideration of her having complied with the former demands made, I begged that the balance still remaining might be remitted. She was literally at my feet for one day : though I told her not to come, she arrived in her palankeen at my tent, to lay all her sorrows before me. I could not turn her away ; and as she entered she fell prostrate on the ground, and placed her son in my arms. Both were weeping

bitterly. She begged hard for her estates ; but as the attachment had been made at the instance of the Nizam's Government, I could not take upon myself to withdraw it, and could but assure her that I did not wish to punish her more, and that I trusted Government would be lenient in the end. The Ranee had arrived just after breakfast, and sat with me till sunset, surrounded by her women and secretaries, unveiled, nor did she ever seclude herself afterwards.

I had sent for my wife, who, with her brother, soon afterwards arrived from Hyderabad, and I selected an open spot within the walls, about 500 feet above the plain, to which we removed. The Ranee now asked permission to come and visit us, and I was glad that she should do so. She offered many valuable presents—shawls and ornaments—and tried to put a large string of pearls round my wife's neck ; so that I was obliged to tell her firmly that if she attempted again to force presents on my wife, or to talk to her about her affairs, I should be forced to forbid all communication between them.

The next day we returned the visit, and were introduced to all the family.

The late Rajah had had three wives, and in all there were fifteen children. Among these, one

lively child, of about ten years old, became our prime favourite, and she engaged me in a game of romps, pelting me with roses, and laughing merrily. There was not the slightest attempt on the part of any of them to hide their faces, nor was there any of the stiffness usual among native families.

The more I became acquainted with the State affairs, the more anxious I grew to have the remainder of the Ranee's debt to the Nizam's Government remitted. Under cloak of British authority, it had, on the late Rajah's accession, not only imposed a fine of fifteen lakhs (£150,000), but an additional yearly tribute of 56,000 rupees. It was no wonder, therefore, that under an improvident and neglectful Government, the State affairs had fallen lower and lower, and it required very careful treatment to enable them to recover.

Eventually, at my suggestion, a new arrangement was entered into between the Nizam's Government and the State of Shorapoor. Another division of the *pergunnas* or counties was authorised, ceding that of Deodroog to the Nizam, and retaining that of Andola on the frontier line, whose people were most unwilling to be transferred.

The Nizam's Government was to give up all claim for arrears of tribute and succession fine;

and the annual tribute was now fixed at 60,000 rupees a-year. These were the best terms I could get ; and it was only by showing how entirely the successive Residents at Hyderabad had been misled by reports from temporarily deputed officers to Shorapoor, and how the original sum demanded under the treaty of 1800 had been increased, that I gained my point. If, as in justice ought to have been the case, past exactions had been repudiated, the Nizam's Government would have been obliged to refund ; but all these exactions had been recognised by us, English officers had been deputed to levy them, and their transactions were immutable. The retention of Andola, and remission of all arrears of tribute—the interest on which, at the ordinary market rate of 12 per cent, would be 60,000 rupees—were certainly some service done to the State, and were the most favourable terms I could procure. But the Nizam's Government grumbled terribly at being obliged to give up its dominant position, and revert to its original status. It could no longer make extra demands through us, and get us by treaty to enforce them. It could not impose a succession fine on the young Rajah. It could only get what I had proposed, and which was ratified by the Supreme Government.

Of course, owing to these arrangements, my friend the Ranee got back her estates and the revenues collected, which had been kept in deposit; but her appanage was reduced from 30,000 to 18,000 rupees a-year, the Rajah's expenses being borne by the State. I think at the time she was very grateful, and the reduction of the Nizam's Government demands seemed to strike every one—most of all Pid Naik. Indeed, with careful management the State would be easily able to pay them.

I soon perceived that it would be necessary to lose no time in placing the young Rajah on his *guddee*, or throne, that he might be publicly acknowledged. My reason was this. For some years after her marriage, the Ranee had had no male child, nor had any of the other wives. In fact the late Rajah had formed two other marriages, in hopes of having an heir.

If there were no male heir born to him, his brother Pid Naik naturally succeeded; but Pid Naik declined succession for himself, and put forward his eldest son for adoption, who had been generally acknowledged, although no ceremony of actual adoption took place.

However, when hope was nearly at an end, the Ranee had a son, and Pid Naik's son was thrown

out. It came to my ears that Pid Naik, encouraged by his boon companions at his drinking-bouts, had said that "Now he could do as he pleased, and had the ball at his feet, and he would show them all so after I had been withdrawn." In any case, whether this were true or not, he was very cool about the ceremony of placing the young Rajah on his *guddee*. He made many excuses. It would cost a great deal of money ; the Beydur clans must be brought together, and he was by no means sure of them ; an auspicious day must be selected, and was far distant, and the like ; and if anything went wrong, he would get the blame. However, I simply told him I had received orders from the Supreme Government to proceed with the ceremony on the earliest possible date, and according to the rules and customs of the family on such occasions, and that it must be done forthwith.

And so it was. Arrangements were made of all kinds. There proved to be enough money in the treasury to pay the expenses of the ceremony. Invitations were sent to the neighbouring families and people of rank, and the State observed its usual profuse hospitality to all, and its charitable doles to beggars, dancers, jugglers, acrobats, &c. ; and for three days previous to the

ceremony, the feasting was perpetual. Finally, when all the Hindoo rites had been concluded, I took the little Rajah, who had been sitting close to me, as his mother had implored me not to allow him out of my sight, and leading him to his *guddee*, or cushion of embroidered velvet, placed him upon it in the name of the Government of India and the Nizam.

“Whoever,” I said to the crowds about us, “is the friend of your Rajah Enketappa Naik” (and I added his titles), “is the friend of both Governments; and whoever is his enemy is our enemy, and will be dealt with as he deserves. The British Government will protect your Rajah and his interests till he reaches his majority, after which his possessions will be made over to him. It is, you see, a long journey to travel: some will faint and fall by the way—some will fail; but in the end, if ye are all of my mind, ye will joyfully repeat this ceremony.”

Then followed great clapping of hands, and again the old cry, “Jey Mahadeo Baba!” and afterwards the distribution of *pan* and *atr*, with handsome shawls and dresses of honour, according to degree. The ceremony being ended, the little prince rose, and thanked all present in, for his age, a very dignified manner; and I took .

him back to his mother, who embraced him passionately. Whatever the Rance may have been, there was no question that her love for him then was devoted, and that she was very grateful to me.

“This would never have taken place but for you,” she said to me, as she embraced my wife, who had been with her all the afternoon. “What can I give you?—how can I thank you both? My child is in truth yours, and you must guard him henceforth as a son.”

We submitted, as a matter of form, to be enveloped in rich shawls, and soon afterwards took our leave. Pid Naik had accompanied us to the entrance of the inner court, but it was not etiquette for him to proceed further, and he waited for us and went with us to our tents, amidst firing of guns and noisy music.

So far, I hoped I had done my duty, but I felt uncertain as to the future, for no definite position had been assigned to me as yet.

CHAPTER VIII.

1843-44.

MY position, however, had meanwhile been considered by the Governor - General, and shortly afterwards I received the following despatch from General Fraser, dated 18th May 1843 :—

“ I transmit for your information and guidance the accompanying letter from the Secretary of the Government of India.

“ The sentiments of the Governor-General regarding the administration of the Shorapoor State during the minority of the Rajah Enketappa Naik are so fully and clearly expressed in this despatch, that it is only left for me to request that you will be strictly guided by them.

“ I shall be glad, however, to be informed that the caution enjoined in the fourth para. has been observed, and that the system upon which it has

now been determined that the administration of Shorapoor shall be for some time conducted, is in conformity with the wishes, not only of Rajah Pid Naik, but also of the most influential persons in the State.

“ You will be so good as furnish me with such occasional reports of your proceedings as may be necessary for my information, and for eventual submission to the Government of India ; and I shall be glad to be informed of the measures you may deem it advisable to adopt, with a view to give a good practical education to the Rajah ; and I beg that you will from time to time make me acquainted with the character and disposition he manifests, and the extent or degree in which he profits by the instructions you may have the opportunity of giving, or causing to be given to him.

“ It will be highly gratifying to you to have received the Governor-General’s entire approbation of your conduct ; and I am happy to be able to add, as the expression of my own personal sentiments towards you, that I place the utmost reliance on the judgment and discretion which you have hitherto manifested, and which are so essentially necessary in the official connection of every British officer with the natives of India.”

(Signed) “ J. S. FRASER.”

Copy of despatch from the Secretary to the Government of India with the Governor-General, to Major-General Fraser, Resident at Hyderabad :

“POLITICAL DEPARTMENT, AGRA,
3d May 1843.

“SIR,—

“1. The Governor-General has read with regret Captain Taylor’s letter and its enclosures transmitted to me in your letter of the 20th ultimo.

“2. The Governor-General was in hopes that the administration of the Shorapoor State might have been carried on during the minority of the Rajah, ostensibly by Rajah Pid Naik, with the general advice and support of Captain Taylor, but without his assuming a prominent part in the government.

“3. The facts stated by Captain Taylor, and the decided opinion expressed by him, in which you coincide, with the admission of Rajah Pid Naik of his inability to carry on the government, and his request that you will appoint a gentleman who, in conjunction with himself, will arrange the affairs of the Shorapoor State—all these circumstances compel the Governor-General to adopt, most reluctantly, the conclusion that a British officer will be necessary, in order to secure

to the inhabitants of the Shorapoor State, during the minority of the Rajah, a just and beneficial government, and to enable the State to perform its pecuniary obligations towards the Nizam and its creditors.

“ 4. The Governor-General considers it desirable that, notwithstanding the transference of the administrative authority in Shorapoor to a British officer, Rajah Pid Naik should, as far as possible, be put forward as the head of the State during the minority of the Rajah ; and it will be obviously expedient that the British officer should act in concert with Rajah Pid Naik, and place the young Rajah upon the Hindoo throne (*guddee*) with the usual ceremonies.

“ 5. The Governor-General therefore authorises your directing the adoption of such measures as will be necessary for the adoption of these objects ; it being understood that the proceedings be in conformity with the wishes, not of Rajah Pid Naik alone, but of the most influential persons of Shorapoor.

“ 6. The Governor-General intimated, on the death of the late Rajah, the interest he took in the welfare of the minor Rajah succeeding under such painful circumstances ; and his Lordship particularly directs that every consideration be

upon all occasions shown to the young Rajah ; and that every measure be adopted which the judgment of yourself and the British officer at Shorapoor suggests, for the purpose of imparting to him a good practical education, such as may render him capable of administering the government of his State with benefit to his subjects.

“ 7. It is not sufficient to place in the hands of the Rajah, on his attaining his majority, a prosperous and well-ordered State. It is due to his people—it is necessary to our character—that the State should be confided to hands by which prosperity and good order may be preserved.

“ 8. The Governor-General has much satisfaction in seeing the difficult task of restoring the State of Shorapoor to the condition it seems to have once enjoyed, confided to Captain Taylor, whose good disposition, ability, and discretion, have been manifested in all the transactions in which he has been engaged.

“ 9. The Governor-General requests that you will communicate to Captain Taylor his entire approbation of his conduct.”

(Signed)

“ J. THOMASON,
Secy. to the Govt. of India.”

It was in consequence of these instructions that

the young Rajah had been placed upon his throne, and I was very grateful for this proof of Lord Ellenborough's entire approval of my conduct. I had received neither from General Fraser nor the Governor-General, any specific instructions as to the details of the future government of the State, and I felt, as these appeared to be left entirely in my hands, that no greater proof of confidence could have been manifested. I had given Pid Naik a fair chance from the time I had put him in charge as regent. I had assisted him to the very utmost of my power ; but he was utterly helpless and incompetent. I had suggested many systematic improvements for his treasury ; for collection of the revenue ; for provision for the tribute he would have to pay, and the like,—not one of which plans was there the slightest intention, apparently, to carry out. On the contrary, he seemed to be surrounded by a new set of harpies and obstructors of order. He gave himself up occasionally to fits of intoxication, from which no one could arouse him.

His excellent wife made piteous complaints to me and to my wife on the subject, and so did his sons, giving me sad accounts of his bad habits, and how sometimes for days together no one saw him, when he and his special favourites continued

their drunken orgies night and day. If I remonstrated privately he cried like a child, promised most humbly to amend, and was as bad as ever directly afterwards. His brother, his uncle, and all the Government officers reasoned with him, but in vain; he was indeed hopeless.

I had explained the purport of the Government despatches, and had quoted to Pid Naik and all concerned, including the chief bankers and merchants, the points to be observed, and they expressed themselves perfectly satisfied. The population, too, of the villages and districts seconded the others with every expression of confidence; but still, I thought more was necessary; and as I was summoned to Hyderabad as a witness on a court-martial then about to sit, I wished to take the opportunity of laying the whole subject before General Fraser, with a view to obtaining his specific instructions with regard to Rajah Pid Naik.

There were many important matters to arrange. The local bankers had claims, they alleged, upon the State for nearly twenty lakhs (£200,000). There had been no revenue settlement of the land for more than half a century; but I need not describe the condition of an effete State which had been going rapidly to ruin

under heavy pressure from without and absolute neglect within. No hand had been stretched out to save it; and, I think, more pity and consideration ought to have been shown to the oldest princely family in the Deccan, which, through all wars and revolutions, had preserved its possessions without committing itself with any one since the earliest period of the Adil Shahy dynasty of Beejapoor.

Fortunately, I was not obliged to leave Shorapoor till August, when the first violence of the monsoon was over, and the weather was delightfully cool and pleasant. Although we had lived all through the hot season in tents on the open ground, none of the party had suffered in the least, and our time had passed very pleasantly. My wife was a great favourite with the ladies of the palace, and with the children, who came sometimes to spend the day, playing very much like other little ones, and bringing their dolls with them, for whom feasts were made. Sometimes the Ranee herself, or one of the other matrons, accompanied them, and the young Rajah came too; sometimes Pid Naik's sons and their mother, who was very delicate: in short, there was no constraint among them, and they went and came as they pleased.

I had heard these Beydurs called "savages ;" but in truth they are no more savages than other nations of India. They are perhaps somewhat more blunt and less obsequious, far more natural in manner, and we liked them all the better for that. My own tent was open to all comers from breakfast-time to sunset—no one was refused ; and although I did not personally inquire into cases of complaints, I referred all such petitions to Rajah Pid Naik by endorsement. If I could have spoken Canarese, I should have felt more at my ease ; but many who came spoke Mahratta and Hindostanee, so that I managed to get on very comfortably on the whole. I had selected a site for a house during one of our evening rambles—a small level plain on the top of the plateau to the west of the city, and directly overlooking it, the mountain beyond it, and the plain beyond that again. The view was certainly very fine ; and as the site was 400 feet above the town, it would not only be cooler, but more healthy than below.

The ground was being cleared, and the places marked out for house, stables, and servants' offices. I hoped, on our return from Hyderabad, to find the building had commenced ; and there were plenty of first-rate masons and other work-people in the city. It was impossible to say how

long we might be detained at Hyderabad, so I could only leave all the directions in my power to Pid Naik ; and having done this, we started, and marching as rapidly as we could, we reached Hyderabad on the tenth day.

Before leaving Shorapoor, however, I had the great pleasure of receiving the following extract from a private letter from Lord Ellenborough to General Fraser, who wrote—

“It gives me great pleasure to send you the subjoined extract from a *private* letter from Lord Ellenborough, on the subject of your management of recent affairs at Shorapoor.”

(*Extract.*)

“The account Captain Taylor gives of the proceedings of the Beydurs, and of the arrangement with them, is very satisfactory. He has managed the affairs in which he has been engaged extremely well.”

And I considered that a private letter from the Governor-General was much more complimentary and comforting than a public and formal despatch.

After all, I was not long detained at Hyderabad, and arrived once more at Shorapoor on the

1st September. My presence was very necessary, but as everything was going on well and quietly, there was no need for any anxiety about me. During my short stay at Hyderabad, General Fraser and I had fully discussed the Governor-General's despatch, which I had already communicated to Pid Naik, and all the principal persons of Shorapoor, including the Ranee ; but it was necessary, I was of opinion, for the Resident to write himself to Pid Naik on the subject. The commencement of an English direction of local affairs was a momentous event for Shorapoor ; and no room for doubt ought to remain, or any question of the purpose of the British Government. My own position, and that of Pid Naik, should be clearly defined. General Fraser desired me to prepare the draft of a letter in English and in Persian, to be sent to Pid Naik, embodying the wishes and directions of the Governor-General. This I did ; but the Resident did not approve of it, and said he would make one himself. When the two were compared and checked by the best Persian scholars, who were called in, mine at last, was adopted.

I had availed myself of Mr Palmer's directions in correcting my own draft. He was a first-rate Persian scholar, and could at once suggest the

most expressive, as well as the most courteous, and plain, and decided phrases that a paper of the kind required, as applicable to persons of Pid Naik's position and understanding. Mr Palmer's assistance to me had proved very valuable. I wish I possessed a copy of this document, but I do not find it amongst my father's collection of my letters and papers.

My position at Shorapoor was declared to be supreme, and that of Pid Naik executive; and sound advice was given him to practise rigid and systematic economy, until the financial difficulties of the State were overcome.

Pid Naik was styled "Rajah Pid Naik Dewan," * and was to be allowed a seal as such. He had claimed the same title as the Rajah, "Bulwunt Bhyree Bahadur;" but this was a ridiculous assumption, and would have been resented by the Rajah, the Ranee, and others of the family. Doubtless he would feel chagrined by the title proposed, and by the whole matter; but I had no resource but to do my duty, and let him down as easily as I could.

As soon as I arrived at Shorapoor, Pid Naik paid me a visit. Everything had gone on smoothly during my absence, and I compli-

* Regent.

mented him upon all he had done. I then delivered to him the Resident's letter, and he sent away his crowd of attendants and followers in order that we might discuss the subject unrestrainedly between us. It had been left optional to him to accept the orders of the Governor-General or not, as he chose; and I was ready to transmit his wishes, whatever they might be, whether of entire and *bonâ fide* acquiescence in the orders issued, or his objections to them, as he pleased. If he acquiesced, it would be my duty and care to make the execution of these orders as light and pleasant to him as possible; but if he objected, I could only transmit any letter or paper that he might give me.

He said his honour and reputation were in my hands, and he would think over the letter from the Resident, and give me an answer as soon as possible. This he did; and the reply, when it came, was quite satisfactory, and expressed his desire to work faithfully with me for the good of the State. Between us we made out a budget of the State revenues for the year, and I found that we might have 240,000 rupees, out of which the local charges would be 100,000, leaving 140,000 for payment of tribute and interest, with a balance to go on with.

A few days after this interview there happened a disagreeable affair in Shorapoor. One of my *chuprassies*, or messengers, was buying some grass in the market-place from a Beydur woman, and was badly wounded by an armed Beydur standing near. Whether my *chuprassie* had insulted the woman or the man, or whether they quarrelled over the price, I never knew; but he was never accused of having done so. I had just set out from my house to ride up to my new works on the hill, and had turned into the market-place, when I saw the Beydur run off, brandishing his bloody sword; and after procuring what assistance I could for my wounded *chuprassie*, I went after the Beydur who had cut him down. I met him in the main street, and ordered him to give me up his sword, which strangely enough he did at once (I had only a slight riding-whip in my hand), and telling my prisoner to go before me, I took him to the palace guard, and gave him in custody to the men on duty there, to be kept safely until Pid Naik, who was out shooting, should return. I then rode on towards my new buildings, and returned shortly before sunset.

It was still quite light as I rode back into the town, and I found a crowd of armed men before

the palace gate, shouting and much excited. The first idea that occurred to me was that there might have been some collision between my escort of twenty infantry and the Beydurs; but I had sent my people word to remain quiet, and they had done so.

As soon as I appeared I was surrounded in an instant on every side, so that it was impossible for my horse to move one step, and the shouting and peculiar shrieking of the Beydurs were indescribable. Many matchlocks were pointed at once close to my body; and I saw one fellow's match pressed into the priming-pan by the trigger twice, and grains of powder igniting on the end of it each time it was withdrawn. For a moment I gave myself up; but, by the mercy of God, the piece did not go off. Drawn swords were also brandished close to my face, but no blow was made at me; and the whole passed in less time than it takes me to write.

At that moment several men ran out of the palace gate, one of whom I knew to be the Rajah's own body-servant. He pushed through the crowd, struck up the matchlock then touching me, and calling out to the crowd, pushed them aside right and left, telling me not to be afraid. He then accompanied me to my house,

where I found my escort under arms and much excited.

The Ranee sent me word that both she and the Rajah would come to me at once, if I would allow them, and stay with me, or would I come to them? But there was no need now, though I felt in my heart I had nearly tasted death. The men of my escort were very savage ; and it was as much as I could do to prevent their marching to the palace court and taking the offending Beydurs into their own custody. Pid Naik shortly after arrived in a terrible fright, and offered to stay with me all night, but I felt no further alarm. The Beydurs, however, went to the palace guard at night and carried off the prisoner to the hills. He was a champion among them, a wrestler and athlete, and had the appellation of "Bich Kuttee," or "Thrower away of the Scabbard."

In the morning all the clans of the "Twelve Thousand" were found to have gone out upon the hills, where they were shrieking, blowing horns, and beating their drums all day, vowing they would not surrender the man unless they had a guarantee from me that his life would be spared.

A row with the Beydurs would have been very serious, and I was determined not to have one if

I could help it; at the same time I was equally determined not to give way an inch. Pid Naik was in a desperate fright; but I would not allow him to give in, and he obeyed my orders, insisting that the prisoner should be sent back to him.

By evening the Beydurs grew tired, and made over the prisoner to Pid Naik, who forthwith put him in irons, at my suggestion, though he was more than half afraid of his own people. I daresay they did not like it; but it was no time to show the white feather. Having waited for a day to see that all was quiet, I urged Pid Naik to make the Beydurs bind themselves down by strong bonds to behave quietly for the future. At this they took fresh alarm; but they did not go back to the hills, and I knew my game was safe; and so it proved in the end. I made known to them that I would take no farther steps in the affair until the issue of the wounded *chuprassie's* case was known; and I was very glad for all parties concerned that he seemed going on well. I sent them all away, with a present for the wife and family of the imprisoned Beydur, as it appeared they subsisted entirely on the fruit of his labour, and all seemed satisfied and happy.

I daresay my *chuprassie* was a good deal in

fault—for he was a bit of a coxcomb, and no doubt had given himself airs—and I only put the Beydur in irons in order to make an example.

A few weeks after, on the occasion of the “Dussera”—a great anniversary festival of the Hindoos—the head men of all the clans of the “Twelve Thousand” came to me with a very humble petition on behalf of the Beydur still in confinement, and said they would esteem it a direct favour if the man were released to them. They were ready to make any agreement or bond with me, and to obey me implicitly in all things. My *chuprassie* had nearly recovered from his severe wound; at all events, his life was no longer in danger from it: and as he too joined in the request that his assailant should be forgiven, and the young Rajah, Pid Naik, and his brothers, and other influential persons, backed up the petition, I saw no reason to refuse. By consenting, I had a fair hope that this hitherto utterly lawless and uncontrollable body of men might be brought under some kind of subjection for the future. I therefore complied with their request, and the Beydur prisoner was released before them. He came blubbering to me, falling at my feet and begging pardon. He then prostrated himself before my *chuprassie*, who also

forgave him. But I had impressed upon Pid Naik the necessity of requiring from all the heads of the clans much more stringent and more formal engagements than they had given before, which, it now leaked out, they repudiated as irregular and not binding. At the first hint of what was intended, the Beydurs took fright, but they did not go back into the hills; and after a consultation among themselves, under their great tree of assembly in the centre of the town, they gave in, and professed themselves ready to do as I wished. The agreements, which contained several clauses, were drawn up by me. They secured to the clans all hereditary lands and privileges, but made me, as the chief authority in the State, supreme judge in criminal cases, and in any other trials which could not be settled by their own *punchayet* (court). My drafts were copied by their own chief registrar, and signed by him, and by all the chiefs, and many others. When the agreements were ratified in all respects, I held a court, and the papers were presented to me formally, and I crossed hands over them with the chiefs of every clan. It was a very anxious period, and the complete success of the affair was a very great relief to me. General Fraser, too, had been very anxious; for any disturbance among the "clans of the Twelve Thou-

sand" would have been most embarrassing after what had at first occurred. However, in the end he was satisfied that I was in reality now stronger than ever.

Several years afterwards, I heard the truth of the whole affair, and I was thankful I had not known it at the time. The plot had been originated by Kishnaya, Pid Naik's especial favourite and boon companion, whether with his master's knowledge and connivance or not I cannot say; but Pid Naik was, whether accidentally or on purpose, absent that day on a hog-hunting expedition.

The plan was this: One of my men—any one—was to be quarrelled with and cut down by the Beydur champion, on which it was presumed that I would immediately attack the Beydurs to recover possession of him, and thus a general *mêlée* would ensue, in which I would be made away with. The scheme, I daresay, seemed perfectly feasible, for no blame would have attached to any one, except, perhaps, myself. But, through God's great mercy, I escaped.

As soon as I could leave Shorapoor after the Dussera festival, I determined on making a short tour to see the country and become acquainted with the rural population, and also to give direc-

tions concerning the first settlement of revenue. I had, too, some cases of border raids and robberies of cattle by Beydurs on the northern frontier, to inquire into and adjust. I found that for generations past no notice had ever been taken of such depredations by the Rajahs, and the issues had been left to the strongest. This, however, would not do now. I found that, wherever the land was under cultivation, the crops were, for the most part, very fine, but that there was comparatively little under tillage, when the large areas of village lands were considered. For these the people were clamorous for leases. I was obliged to tell them at present I could do nothing, but that I hoped to return as soon as I could. Meanwhile I was picking up all the information in my power, in my rides over village lands. There was plenty of game everywhere, and my bag was generally well filled; the people were exceedingly well-disposed and civil, and my time was passed very pleasantly. In November I received official notification of my promotion:—

“Captain Meadows Taylor, 6th Nizam’s Infantry, is promoted to the rank of ‘Captain Commandant,’ with effect from 7th July last, *vice* Doveton resigned the service. Captain Commandant Meadows Taylor is posted to the 7th

Regiment, but will continue in charge of the affairs of Shorapoor."

I was therefore secure of a regimental command in case of any alteration in the arrangements at Shorapoor. I returned there about the middle of November, and was distressed and vexed to find that Pid Naik had been at his old work, drinking very hard.

"I find," I wrote to my father on the 22d Novemb^r, "Pid Naik is seemingly on his last legs, morally and physically. He looks very shaky, and has been seriously ill, after some days of beastly drunkenness; and I am sure more will follow when I leave again.

"I had to counteract endless petty schemes and dirty tricks. 'Who is the man who prevents these?' said his Brahmins; and he replied—

"'Ah, it's all very well for you; your knuckles are not rapped: it is only mine.'

"I would not be put off with excuses that so-and-so had peculated or intrigued, but would only exclaim—

"'You are the executive, and you have full power to check all irregularities. If I did the work myself, you would grumble, and I look to you. Why cannot you go on comfortably, and in a broad, straight road with me? You know you

always suffer in the end. Why are you so foolish ? If you want money, say so—come and ask for it. The treasury (for I had established one with some difficulty) is not yours or mine ; it belongs to the State. You can have what you require for State purposes ; but do not steal from it, or allow cheating.’

“ Personally we are very good friends, and now and then he really does some trifling business ; but where the State moneys are concerned, he has no idea of honour or principle. He has not been seen for the last two months in public, except when he has come to visit me ; and the people whom he employs have largely increased their power. Here is an instance of what goes on :—

“ A learned man and very holy Brahmin who returned from the annual pilgrimage to Trippetti, and had charge of the State funds and expenses there, was asked to send in his accounts ; and when examined, a debt of 2500 rupees (£250) was proved against him, which I directed he was to pay—and he promised to do so in fifteen days. This caused a very great sensation.

“ ‘So great a Brahmin ! so holy a Shastrée ! That he should be made to pay !’

“ ‘Why not ?’ said I. ‘Has he not cheated

the State, and Trippetti also? and, moreover, acknowledged to having done so?’

“‘Oh yes,’ was the reply, ‘but he is a Shastree, and has spent it at the shrine of Sri Ballajee.’

“‘So much the better,’ say I. ‘But Sri Ballajee is just. He did not like the stolen money, and he sent the Shastree back to pay his debts!’

“‘Ah, truly, that may be the case,’ said a knowing old clerk; and after a very long discussion, the assembly finally gave it as their opinion that I had hit the right nail on the head.

“Pid Naik had, I knew, been offered 500 rupees as his share of the spoil, if, indeed, he had not already bagged the money; and he not only proposed that *no* demand should be made against the Shastree, but that he should be given another 500 rupees, as a mark of approbation!”

My house was getting on very well. Building was very cheap, and I hoped to finish it for 2000 rupees. It was all of granite, which the stone-cutters sold in large blocks $1\frac{1}{2}$ foot long and 4 to 6 inches thick, 6 to 10 inches broad, for 3 rupees a thousand. I got the wood for the roof for nothing, for there was a lot lying at an old fort in the Nizam’s country, which the land revenue officer seemed delighted to get rid of, as no one had claimed it for years.

There were about forty-six beams of various sizes, which answered my purposes capitally, and were well seasoned, saving me a very great expense, both in procuring wood and conveying it perhaps a hundred miles. Lime, too, was very cheap; but the building was principally done with mud and stone, and only pointed on the outside so as to keep out damp.

I employed about forty people. They did not work so fast as English workmen, but on the whole I was very well satisfied. A mason's wages at this time were about 6d. a-day, and the women, who assisted largely, had from 1½d. to 4d. On this they lived well, and many possessed gold and silver ornaments purchased out of their own earnings! I was obliged to write to Bellary, seventy miles off, for an estimate of carpenter's work, as the making of doors properly was an art quite unknown in Shorapoor. The fitting stones to the corners of the doors and windows involved employing a different class of masons, those who worked with chisel and hammer, and were quite distinct from the wall-builders. Their wages were higher, and they had to find their own tools, which were all of the best steel.

The arch between the two centre rooms was turned in one day by two men in good stone and

mortar work: it was 12 feet span, and 2 feet thick. I suggested to them to make a rough wooden frame to build over, but they shook their heads, and so I let them alone; and they proceeded to build up the form of the arch between the piers with rough stones and mud, then struck the circle at the top, and smoothed it over with mud; this soon dried in the sun, and the next day the arch was built over it, and was as firm as a rock. I often wondered what English workmen would have said to it all.

I laid out a flower-garden too, and the soil turned out very good. I had to clear away some rocks, and make the ground tolerably smooth. The Ranee kindly gave me a piece of ground in one of her gardens, at the foot of my hill, in which was a good well, so I did not despair of having plenty of plants, and wished to try and induce a taste among the people for English flowers and vegetables. I sowed beans, peas, cabbages, broccoli, and cauliflowers, which eventually thrived and flourished. I was often amused on a holiday to watch the crowds of people who came up from neighbouring villages, and from the town, to see what was going on. Sometimes one, wiser than the rest, endeavoured to explain to the others "all about it;" but they only put

their forefingers to their teeth, shook their heads, and marvelled silently.

My friends the Beydurs were now very peaceable, and conducted themselves very quietly, cultivating their fields, and sometimes coming down from their hills with presents to me of partridges or other game. They generally had their dogs in leashes, and carried falcons on their wrists.

As soon as I could leave we went out again into the districts, and I began my work in earnest through the country.

I found the people very distrustful at first, and I was not surprised at it, as their own Government had never kept faith with them at any time; and it was but natural that they should be suspicious of me.

“How do we know,” they said, “that your agreements with us are binding?” and I replied—

“I shall inquire into your condition before I sign your leases, and I shall visit your villages and look into your accounts; and, moreover, I give you my word, the word of an English gentleman, which cannot be broken.”

“But you may go away?”

“If I do, another will succeed me.”

“Well, we shall see. If you keep faith with us

for one year, we will take heart, and cultivate all the waste lands in the country."

These scenes and conversations were of constant recurrence, and soon the people began to talk to me, and to consult me on their business affairs, and I felt pretty sure that when the revenue settlement was begun, the people would trust me, and get over their shyness and suspicion. I had determined to admit no strangers as clerks; clumsy as they were, the hereditary officers of the State had the first claim for employment, and must be educated into regular system if they were to be of use afterwards. I therefore made my selection, leaving the others with Pid Naik. An extract from a letter, written in December 1843, will give some idea of the condition in which I found the head village of the *pergunna* or county which I first visited:—

"These districts are in the worst conceivable condition. No accounts whatever have been kept; no record of the revenues, or of the land in and out of cultivation for sixty-seven years, and you may well imagine the work of cleaning out and reorganising the Augean stable of abuse and corruption. Whole villages in this county are deserted, and are little more than heaps of ruined houses. This village, Hoonsigee, had formerly a

weekly market and many dealers in grain, a hundred families of weavers, and a host of other tradesmen. Now, there are left only one grain-dealer and two weavers. Half the cultivators' houses are in ruins, and the land is more than two-thirds waste. The revenue used to be 4900 rupees a-year, or £490. Now, it has declined to 875 rupees, or £87, 10s., and is collected with difficulty; what could be done? I will tell you what I have done. I invited back the weavers on a low tax of three rupees a-year—they ought to pay twelve; but then they have to rebuild their houses. With them come other tradespeople, cultivators, grain and flour sellers. While we have been here fifteen families have returned from the British territory, and more are coming in. I can get no better terms than three rupees per *cooroo*, and I have accepted that for three years, with an addition of three for the next three years, when the land is to be reassessed; the present assessment being 30 rupees per *cooroo* per year—that is, 40 acres for £3 per year. Matters may differ a little in each county, but I can get land taken on no other terms. People cannot trust the Shorapoor authorities, and mistrust me too for the present. They are very shy—however, that is wearing off very fast, and dur-

ing the last three days they have come forward pretty freely. It is hard work, however, but I don't despair, and hope to lay a foundation for future revenue arrangements. Oh that I were rid of Pid and his crew, who grow more and more obnoxious, idle, and altogether mischievous !”

The year 1844 opened very brightly upon us. I had arranged three small counties; the rent had been only 2000 rupees a-year—it would now be upwards of 3000 rupees, and hereafter would produce 8000 on the new leases. I was beginning to see my way ; and as we approached the Bombay frontier, farmers came in numbers, asking to be allowed to settle and take up new land, as much as I would give them. Of course I made no objection, and they became registered landholders.

We were in excellent health, and found our tent-life very agreeable.

The people came in crowds wherever we encamped. I have had a couple of hundreds about my tent, and they seemed much interested and amused by our ways, which of course were quite new to them. It pleased us to see the confidence they had in us ; and they constantly brought some little gift as token of their friendly feeling. I felt very thankful for all this.

I never worked harder, or felt stronger in my life—sleeping soundly, and eating heartily, and the climate was delicious.

My wife and I used to take our morning rides together over the fields. I had to inspect the lands, and sometimes very amusing scenes took place when gross speculation and roguery were discovered. One was in reference to the *patell*, or head of the village, at which we were encamped, “Kembavee.” This personage had a fine estate and farm of 2410 *beegahs* under excellent cultivation. Some of it was a free grant for services performed by his forefathers; but by the original deed of grant he was to pay 1600 rupees, or £160 a-year for the whole. The land was all under rich crops of *jow-aree* or large millet, wheat, cotton, linseed, and pulse. The *patell* had been paying only 600 rupees a-year for the last sixty-eight years! and had the assurance to ask me for a remission of 200 rupees out of the 600, as some of his crops had failed! This led me to examine into the case carefully, and to go over the whole property, and we rode over literally miles of fields, which were far more like 10,000 *beegahs* than 2410. Of course I gave no remission, and the *patell* voluntarily agreed to pay his full rent of 1600 rupees next year if I would not charge him for arrears!

Here is also another instance.

The *patell* of a village near asked me to come and look at his land, as the crops had dried up. I told the people to meet me on their boundary at sunrise, and I went. The crops were certainly poor ; but I said, " In the Company's territories no man has more land than he pays rent for, therefore remissions are allowed. You seem to have a great deal more than you write down, suppose we try one field ; " there were in it about 15 *beegahs* of wheat, the same of linseed, the same of pulse and cotton—all very fine ; and a patch of *jowaree*, poor and dried up. Altogether, by pacing it, it appeared to me 90 *beegahs*, of the best quality, and all well tilled.

" How much do you pay for this piece ? " I asked ; but there was no answer.

One fellow nudged another, but no one spoke. I asked a second, and a third, with the same result. At last a fine old soldier of the village, a Mussulman, spoke out.

" Please your lordship," said he, " the *patell* pays two rupees (four shillings) for it per year."

" Two rupees ! " cry I. " O *patell* of bad destiny, two rupees for all this land ! Say, how much am I to remit out of that ? Are you not ashamed of yourself to enjoy all this land for

two rupees? Now let me see more of your fields."

"They are all the same," cried the sturdy soldier. "Please your highness, that *patell* takes all the fine land and puts off the poor land upon us poor people, paying what he chooses to the Government; and they are all the same."

"Well spoken, O Khan!" cried a chorus of people; "it is the truth!"

Looking at the honest soldier, I asked him, "Now, where are your fields? if they are bad, you shall have a remission."

He drew himself up, proudly enough, and replied—

"My fields were sown in the rains, and God has been good to me. I have reaped and stored the crop, and my children are eating it. I have paid my rent too, and want nothing but your favour."

So I patted him on the head, and bade all the rest go and do as he had done, and I heard no more of remissions.

So it was in every village; the powerful paid no rent in comparison with the poor, and thus the revenue had been diminishing year by year. No accounts of land had been taken for fifty years or upwards; no one had paid the least

attention to the subject, and it would necessarily take some years to get to the bottom of all the defalcations, and to establish a new and honest system.

Nor had even the rent which had been collected been forwarded to the treasury ; in some places half the sum, or even less, was expended on the village itself, and the balance handed over to the collector. What wonder that the revenue declined ?

It was very hard work, beginning at seven every morning, and lasting till after midnight, except one hour for each meal ; yet I was very well, and the work had to be done somehow. At Shorapoor everything was quiet and prosperous ; but Pid Naik's good wife was very ill, and he wrote despairingly about her. I was very sorry for this, for I knew well if she died he would be enticed by his other wife, who was as great a drunkard as himself, and both would go rapidly to the dogs ; but remonstrances, and even entreaties, were of no use. He made promises which he never fulfilled.

As, after much inquiry, there was no specific charge proved against Chun Busappa, except that of wasteful extravagance, and even this seemed to be more the Ranee's fault than his, I had him

released from Linsoogoor, and he came direct to my camp. Whether he had been the Ranee's paramour or not was no business of mine. His account of the whole matter was of course a different affair altogether. He said he had been trying to do what I was doing, but the corrupt practices prevailing were too strong for him. He said that Luchmangeer, the Gosain banker, had desired the management of affairs ; but that the Ranee had preferred him, and therefore he had become a mark for slander and misrepresentation to Captain Gresley. He would not permit almost unlimited peculation by the *duftardars* and other ministerial officers, and they resented his interference with them, and as he was a "Lingayet," all the Brahmins hated him ; and no doubt there was a good deal of truth in these justifications.

As to Rajah Pid Naik, I knew now very well what he was, and it was scarcely likely that the Ranee, a shrewd, clever woman, who had known him since she was a child, would give in to him, or allow him and the Gosain banker to domineer over her ; and she had never forgotten the proposed adoption of Pid Naik's son by her husband. That feeling rankled at her heart, and until her own son had been formally recognised by the Government of India she had never been

free from anxiety. With me, and to me, I must say that Chun Busappa behaved extremely well. His office was an hereditary one as keeper of the treasury and wardrobe; but he did not wish to resume the actual performance of these duties, and he never interfered with the current business in any respect, while, if I required information on any point, he gave it readily and clearly if he could.

In one respect, indeed, he was highly commendable; he had taken under his charge certain detached villages, and all the Ranee's private estates had been managed by him. In these the people were content and prosperous, the lands were well tilled, and the accounts had been well kept for several years; while he was evidently much liked and respected by the people.

Early in February Rajah Pid Naik's good wife died. She had been the mother of seven children, and was much respected for her charity and piety. I went into Shorapoor to pay him a visit of condolence, but I found him very low and despairing about himself.

His chief anxiety, however, appeared to be that the State should allow him 3000 rupees for his wife's funeral expenses, gifts to Brahmins, &c., and that a market should be founded in her name. I could do nothing without instructions,

at which he did not seem pleased ; and I felt no doubt that, had I not come in from the districts, he would have taken advantage of the occasion to have appropriated at least 10,000 rupees—so dishonest was he. I told him I could not lay out the Rajah's money on his private expenses, but if I received permission from the Resident, the expenditure should be authorised. I saw more clearly every day that had it not been for my presence, the whole of the money would have been made away with, as Pid Naik's people put it into his head that he was in truth Rajah of Shorapoor, and none else ; and the poor little Rajah would have scarcely been able to hold his ground unaided.

I also visited the Ranee and the Rajah, who were overjoyed to see me. I had appointed Mr Murray, the medical attendant attached to me, as instructor in English to the Rajah, and I found he had made very fair progress, being able to read easy stories, and write very fair copies. I was much pleased, and told him when I came to reside in my own house I would look after him myself. He was very intelligent, and never tired of asking me questions about my country, its customs, and its people. He was also learning Persian, Mahratta, and Teloogoo, the lan-

guage of business, and got on very well with all. I found three rooms of my new house were roofed in, and the walls plastered inside; the rest was in active progress, and I hoped all would be ready for us by the time we wished to return.

Meanwhile my work continued, and the condition of some of the towns and villages was truly distressing to witness. One, the town of Narribole, used to pay, according to the accounts given me, 26,000 rupees a-year, comparatively a very few years ago. Now 5000 rupees were collected with difficulty per annum, while no regular accounts had been given in or taken for eighty years! .

By this time, however, it was well understood that I should require accounts and returns properly made out by next season; and there was less trouble, when they saw I was in earnest.

Personally, Lord Ellenborough had been very kind to me; but as special correspondent of the most influential paper in the world, it was impossible to pass over his policy in regard to events in Affghanistan or elsewhere. His proclamation in regard to Scinde, and other transactions, are now matters of past history, but live fresh in the memories of those who were contem-

poraries of that time, and still survive. He had been appointed Governor-General, and had arrived in India at a very critical period. Not only had Lord Auckland's policy, as regarded Affghanistan, broken down utterly, but the force at Cabul had perished miserably in their retreat; an attempt under Pollock to force the Khyber Pass and relieve the brave garrison of Jellalabad had failed. The Sikhs were to the last degree unquiet, and had been so since the death of Runjeet Singh in 1839. The Mahratta State of Gwalior was in a very shaky condition; there were strong indications of disturbance in Scinde; and instances of mutiny in the Madras army had occurred, under the impression that the native portion of it would be required to proceed to Affghanistan. It might have been supposed that Lord Ellenborough, considering his undoubted high character and reputation, would have struck out some definite policy, so as to meet the crisis in a spirit suitable to the emergency.

It is true that, thanks to the indomitable spirit of Pollock and Nott, Cabul was again occupied, and all the captives were rescued, and that the forces under these generals were successfully marched out of Affghanistan. But there were no indications of support from the

Governor-General; on the contrary, for a time timid vacillation, and in the end pretensions of having achieved the success which was due to others. This was very painful to witness then; and when the force actually returned, safely guided through the tumultuous upheavings of the Punjaub, the famous proclamation issued by the Governor-General, which was to be read at every native court, was treated as it deserved by the press of India and of England.

I, in my humble capacity, never had so humiliating a task put upon me as the reading of that proclamation to Rajah Pid Naik, and all the authorities of Shorapoor. Not only did they not comprehend it, but they considered it, as it really was, a piece of bombast, only intended to conceal the disaster of Affghanistan, of which every one knew perfectly, and many no doubt rejoiced over in private, and of which the most exaggerated details were given. If the policy in regard to Gwalior shows finer and more generous features, in the non-annexation of the State after the victories over its mutinous armies—long the nucleus of every discontented and ambitious chief of Central India—what shall be said in regard to the policy in Scinde, which, placed in the hands of an unscrupulous man, ended in the

destruction of that ancient State, with whom the British Government had made treaties of eternal friendship?

These are now, however, subjects of history, and I need not revert to them; but I cannot accord with the opinion, in regard to the actors and the acquiescers in this tragedy. “*De mortuis nil, nisi bonum* ;” and posterity will deal with them as they deserve.

CHAPTER IX.

1844.

I RECEIVED during this time an official despatch from the Military Secretary's pay department fixing all my future allowances, which relieved me from further anxiety on that score. The Resident had behaved very handsomely to me, and I had every reason to be grateful.

We spent three days on the banks of the Krishna—a glorious river, with grand rocks and streams, and dark pools below. I tried fishing; but although fish were plentiful, I could not succeed at first owing to the want of proper tackle. The beauty of the scenery was very great—wild and striking—and the river was much broken by islands: the water reached above a man's waist, and in one place the river divided into five large streams, each more than two hundred yards in width. Higher up I heard there was a fine

waterfall, which I should have liked to visit, but I did not care to delay just then, so we deferred it to another time. We remained out in the district until the end of March, when the heat became suddenly very oppressive and unbearable, and we began to long to inhabit our new house, which, from its lofty position on the hill, would insure our having plenty of air, and cool refreshing wind at any rate at night. I found the house entirely roofed in, and several rooms, quite enough for our accommodation, ready; and we were very soon greatly the better for the change.

But I was not happy about Pid Naik's goings on. He was engaged in an intrigue at Hyderabad, through Luchmangeer, the Gosain banker, the object of which was, absurd as it may appear, to get himself recognised by Rajah Chundoo Lall, the Minister of the Nizam, as Rajah of Shorapoor. This scheme was to be backed up by the Nizam himself, in order that, as in the case of the district officers in 1829, the interference of the English might be withdrawn. I personally did not care about this; but I saw it would unsettle the little mind Pid Naik possessed, and that he was conducting himself now far more like the Rajah than the "Dewan." He spent and threw about money just as he pleased, in defiance of his own promises

and my directions, and this could not be permitted. I therefore desired him—

1st, To give no orders upon the treasury without my counter-signature.

2dly, To allow no persons except the regular Government officers to interfere with State affairs; and,

3dly, To appoint any day in the week most convenient to himself for a General Durbar or Court, at which I, with the Rajah, would attend to receive reports, hear petitions, and transact general business.

I never received any reply to these proposals in writing; and though Pid Naik came over and over again to see me, and promised most faithfully that he would do all that was required of him, I was told by some of his own people that he had not the slightest intention of fulfilling his promises.

In May the reports of the Shorapoor intrigues became so notorious at Hyderabad, that my friend Captain Malcolm, assistant to the Resident, wrote several times to warn me of them, and desired me to keep well on my guard against them, &c. As affairs stood at present, according to Captain Malcolm's account, Luchmangeer had got the support of the Minister and of the Nizam him-

self. The Minister had been promised 30,000 rupees, with 20,000 to some subordinates; the Nizam himself was to have 100,000 rupees, or £10,000. And all had been led to believe that the Shorapoor treasury was full, and that the amount could be paid over to them at once.

“If you will refer to my previous letters,” I wrote to my father, “you will find, I daresay, that a balance of five lakhs of rupees was said to be due to the Nizam’s Government when Captain Gresley made his settlement. When I became perfectly acquainted with these affairs I thought otherwise, and was convinced the balance was due to the other side, and to a large amount. I therefore wrote a letter on the subject, and a very earnest one, to get the Shorapoor estate excused the balance on account of its poverty. To this the Resident would not listen; but as I had no reply from the Governor-General, I thought my letter would have struck him, and that he might have referred the subject to England. Whether he did so or not I know not; but orders have since come out from the Court of Directors that the balance is *not* to be taken, and whatever may have been paid by the Shorapoor State since the late settlement (£16,500) is to be refunded.

“Now the Nizam’s Government does not like this at all, and has not answered the Resident’s note on the subject. Malcolm thinks the Nizam will make a reference to the Governor-General, which will not be successful; for this balance of five lakhs is sheer robbery. What the end of all will be I know not; but if the Governor-General abandons the policy he deliberately undertook, it will be most strange and unaccountable. I do not think he will; and I believe when he hears of their intrigues he will take the bull by the horns, and place the country entirely under my direction, or that of some other English officer, which would be the only means of retrieving the State from ruin and destruction. As to the intrigue, I am not uneasy since I heard it was known at Hyderabad; and if the Governor-General comes down on the Nizam to refund the £16,000 I shall be all right.”

Shortly afterwards General Fraser wrote again to Pid Naik, enclosing copies of extracts from his former letter, to which no reply had been vouchsafed. The General’s letter now required replies, even in the ordinary course of politeness and etiquette. Pid Naik evaded an answer for several days, offering to send his agents; but I would take no verbal answers, and he said he

was too ill to write ; and so we continued to skirmish, and still Pid Naik would give no reply either to the Resident's letter or to mine. His chief counsellors now were a boon companion of his who was once a religious mendicant, and went out accompanied by a boy begging for rice —another, the holy man who was dismissed for cheating in his district last year. The third was the chief spiritual adviser of Luchmangeer, the Gosain banker (whom I had sent to Hyderabad), a man who had again and again complained to me of Pid Naik's indifference to him, at the same time extolling his own holiness. This holy man came to me when he saw that his friend Pid Naik must soon go to the wall, and abused him and the rest, betraying all their confidence. What a pack of scoundrels they all were, to be sure ! Contemtable and most villanous ! Pid Naik was gullible to a degree, and believed all these rascals told him. He asked for money on the most foolish pretexts. He wanted musical boxes, and an English carriage, although there was not a road within miles of Shorapoor where one could possibly be driven,—indeed I had long been endeavouring to persuade him to mend the roads into the city ; but he objected, urging that his so doing would impair the impregnability of the place !

Every day he promised to do exactly as I asked him, and every day he did the contrary, or evaded, or shuffled in some way, till I was obliged to be very imperious in my demands. Then he came cringing and begging me not to tell of him, and agreed to some trifle, by way of a *sop*, and the whole scene was re-enacted. However, I did not keep silence, and I regularly sent copies of our correspondence and details of our communications up to Government, accompanied by some very severe remarks, and I could only hope that Lord Ellenborough would give them his attention in time; and as Pid Naik was perfectly deaf to all remonstrance from me, I could but look to Government to support me.

At last, after much weary waiting, a note came which ran as follows:—

“I have understood the letter of the Resident to *you*, also the Persian extracts which accompany it, in every respect. I consider you to be in the place of the Resident. According to his orders to you, do you act truly.”

Pid Naik was evidently determined not to reply to the Resident himself, and I sent a copy of the foregoing to Hyderabad, to which the Resident answered privately:—

“I need not say how much I regret the difficulties you have experienced from the incapacity

and unaccountable obstinacy of Rajah Pid Naik. It is now a question before the Government of India whether he can at all be retained in the office of Dewan or altogether removed, and yourself installed as the sole and exclusive manager of the district. Recent despatches from the Court of Directors have, however, intervened regarding Shorapoor, upon which I have been obliged to write largely, and these circumstances may perhaps occasion some delay in the coming to a specific decision in the case of Rajah Pid Naik."

After much vexatious delay, I received an account of receipt and expenditure, of which no details were given whatever.

Revenue,	235,000 rupees.
Expenditure by Rajah Pid Naik,	110,000 „
Government debts, including tribute,	110,000 „
Reserve fund,	10,000 „
Losses and extras,	5,000 „

Now the Nizam's Government had only received 50,000 rupees on account, and thus 60,000 were due from Pid Naik on that head! Every one ought to have been paid out of the sum set down, but there were 40,000 rupees of arrears due; and thus a deficiency of one lakh, or 100,000 rupees, had occurred in the financial year. There were about 4000 rupees in the treasury, and about 10,000 rupees of outstanding balances

difficult of realisation. Now there was a new debt of quite a lakh, and how much more had been concealed from me I could not say. If affairs had been honestly conducted, we should have had a surplus to carry on to the next few years. How Pid Naik had got rid of the lakh of rupees which he had thrown away I could never discover; but I imagine much of it had gone to support the intrigue at Hyderabad. Now the accounts would have to be forwarded to Hyderabad, and would tell their own disgraceful story, needing no comment from me. Nothing had come of the intrigue at Hyderabad; and nothing was likely to come of it. The Nizam and his Government had taken warning by the movement of the Supreme Government of India and the Court of Directors, and had thrown off Luchmangeer and his false promises with contempt.

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In August I took my wife to Linsoogoor for medical advice — she was ill and suffering. I had arranged to send her home to England for a time to recruit her strength, which had suddenly and unaccountably declined. I trusted that the means used would enable her to undertake the journey, and that the complete change would set her up. God saw fit to take her from me very suddenly at the last.

Of that time I cannot write. It is many years ago, and all the scene with its sad details rises fresh before me. I tried humbly to bow to the will of God ; but I had lost in her not only my loving and beloved wife, but my steady, true friend, my comfort and my happiness ; so tender in her love, so gentle ; so firm to do right, and so keen to detect wrong. Henceforth I must be alone at Shorapoor, and work on as best I could without her loving presence and her wise, calm counsels, without human aid or sympathy of any kind. Well—it was a bitter grief, and it had to be borne ; so, after a very severe illness which detained me for some time, I returned to take up my work again at Shorapoor alone.

I found my house quite finished now, and looking really beautiful inside and out. What a mockery it seemed to me ! The dear presence that would have made it home to me ; the deft, skilful hands that would have delighted in making it habitable and homelike—these were at rest now, free, at all events, from future pain and suffering ; and in this thought was my only comfort. . . . Fresh anxieties were in store for me at Shorapoor.

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I had been hearing for some weeks past very disagreeable reports in relation to a conspiracy at Shorapoor to destroy the young Rajah at the "Dussera" festival, when great crowds usually assembled. Pid Naik's favourite, Krishnaya, was at the head of this most villanous scheme.

The young Rajah of Gudwall, a neighbouring principality, had been shot in his Durbar with his father and brother, and their bodies had been cast out of the town.

My watchful friend, Captain Malcolm, wrote to me to be on my guard, and look well to the river ferries, because reports were rife that Arabs and Rohillas had moved in my direction, so as to arrive at Shorapoor at or during the "Dussera" festival.

The Ranee was in the wildest state of alarm about her son, and about me; but I had brought another company of the 6th Regiment with me from Linsoogoor, and I had now 170 men—quite enough, I considered, to prevent any disturbance. I had also requested Pid Naik to send Krishnaya to me, as I suspected he was implicated in the plot; but instead he had despatched him to the fort of Wondroog, nine miles off. To my surprise, however, General Fraser ordered a regiment of infantry and 200 cavalry to march on

Shorapoor, and they all arrived the day before the festival. Evidently the Resident was anxious and determined to use every precaution in his power. Very soon after the arrival of the troops, Pid Naik came off to see me in the direst alarm. "What was the meaning of these troops?" he asked. I verily believe that he imagined they had come for him! And as I did not care to erase this impression altogether, I only told him that there were reports of a dangerous and bad character afloat at Hyderabad, relative to some intrigues going on at Shorapoor, and that the troops had been sent by the Resident's orders to be ready in case of emergency and to prevent trouble; but that no one would interfere with him, or molest him in any way, if things went well and quietly.

Two days afterwards, two of Pid Naik's confidential servants came to me privately, saying they had something to disclose; I therefore took down their depositions. A sad revelation, indeed, of contemplated treachery! They professed to have warned their master, but in vain, and therefore came to tell me in the hope that mischief might be prevented. Evidently I had arrived just in time—the scheme was all ready to be carried out. My informants were fearless men,

and gave their information clearly and unhesitatingly. In all respects it accorded precisely with Captain Malcolm's private information received at Hyderabad.

The heads of the depositions were these:—

That for a long time past Pid Naik had tacitly allowed Krishnaya to intrigue; and that he, finding all his efforts at Hyderabad unsuccessful and thwarted by me, had at last grown desperate, and had laid this diabolical scheme to make away with the poor little Rajah and with me also during the procession by means of some villains whom Pid Naik had sheltered (although he had denied having done so to me), and who were rebels from the Nizam's country and notorious desperadoes.

The man who gave the best evidence was manager in Pid Naik's late wife's household. He deplored what had occurred, and how Pid Naik had gradually been brought to listen to Krishnaya's vile plot. He said he did not think his master had any bad intentions of himself, but had been talked over by the others whose names he gave me, and they agreed with those against whom I had received warning from Hyderabad. He said he thought Pid Naik had despatched Krishnaya to Wondroog because he felt certain

that I had discovered the plot, and he would wish to appear well disposed towards me by punishing the chief offender. For as the man said, "If there had been no plot, he would have written to you evasively; as it was, why should he put his favourite directly into prison as soon as you asked for him?"

The *karkoon* or clerk who sat at Pid Naik's gate also gave similar evidence. I requested Captain Stoddart, who was in command of the troops, to move his force nearer, so as to command the entrance to the gate below my hill; but owing to a deep ravine coming in the way, he could not post them nearer than a mile from the gate; however, the road was a good one up to it, and the force could easily move along it in case of necessity.

This movement created some fear, but I sent word to the townspeople not to be afraid—that no harm was intended, and that the procession was to go on as usual.

I was also much surprised by a visit from Krishnaya's most confidential Brahmin, who came to me openly—a man I had never before seen; but he said he could keep quiet no longer, and was most willing to give evidence before Krishnaya himself on oath anywhere. I was indeed de-

lighted, and encouraged him to make a clean breast of it, and a very pretty revelation it proved. He told me he it was who had sent me anonymous warnings and hints on several occasions, and appealed to me whether they had not turned out to be true. And in the present case he said it was he who "had told it to a friend, who had told it to my agents, who had told it to me"! Now all he desired was to be openly confronted with Krishnaya. I took down this deposition also and forwarded it to the Resident; it accorded with the previous ones in every respect.

I then sent for Pid Naik, and without informing him how far he was implicated, told him of the horrible plot that had been discovered, and informed him, before Captain Stoddart as a witness, that I should hold him responsible in life and person for any riot or disturbance, and also for the safe custody of Krishnaya. He did not like this at all, and pretended to be greatly shocked at the contemplated villany; but when I told him further particulars, and what conclusions had been arrived at from his recent acts, he seemed to comprehend the danger to himself if he did not at once exert himself to prevent mischief. He agreed to give the necessary orders, and to see that peace was preserved during the

procession, and in fact I think the shock quite sobered him, for I never saw him so collected or so earnest and clear-headed.

The procession takes place at night, and the Rajah had to proceed from his palace to an open space about a mile off. All the Beydur clans were present, all the State soldiers, and crowds of people. I had a party of a hundred picked men, giving them orders to keep close to the Rajah. We went down to the palace about five o'clock, a rather formidable-looking party. I was on my elephant, with Captain P——, who had come in from Linsoogoor; and then my little force of picked men followed. When we arrived at the palace we dismounted, and each taking the little Rajah by the hand, we led him between us to his elephant, which was waiting, placed him upon it, and then remounted our own. We proceeded very, very slowly, any one might have taken a shot at us that pleased; but God protected all—the fatherless boy and those with him—and we were unhurt. Not a word was spoken, every one was most respectful to us, and we passed on to the place where the ceremonies were performed, under the hill whereon my house was situated. The crowd baffles description; after the ceremonies were ended the fireworks began,

and were very fine ; one bouquet of two hundred rockets was superb. About eleven o'clock we returned to the palace with the Rajah, whom I restored to the arms of his anxious mother. She had been in a state of the wildest alarm and anxiety ; and of her grateful feelings when her child was brought back safely to her I need not speak here.

Thus was I again, through God's great and infinite mercy, preserved through imminent danger.

The next day I demanded Krishnaya from Pid Naik. I hoped that when he was delivered up, the Government would be convinced of the rascality prevailing at Shorapoor, and would be disposed to assume a firmer aspect, and make a final settlement of affairs.

Pid Naik, finding he could make no impression on the Nizam's Government, now began writing letters to Hyderabad complaining of me—and very much calculated to set the Nizam and the British Government by the ears—and sent an agent with them to Hyderabad to deliver them to the Resident and to Colonel Tomkyns. I warned the Resident of what was coming, and then sent for Pid Naik, told him I had heard of his proceedings, and asked him what he had been doing, and what he had written. Then he

swore solemnly "on his children's heads" that all was false. However, in due time Pid Naik's agent arrived at Hyderabad, and delivered the letters to Colonel Tomkyns and to the Resident. Colonel Tomkyns took the letter, but turned out the man who brought it, and the Resident did exactly the same. Both of them forwarded the letters to me without having opened them, and I sent for Pid Naik as soon as I received them, and showed them to him with the seals unbroken. He could say nothing, he could make no excuse or frame no lie, he was so utterly dumfounded; but he went home, and was dead drunk for the next three days!

Meanwhile Pid Naik's agent at Hyderabad had again, through Luchmangeer, the Gosain banker, got the ear of the Nizam's confidant, and he reported to his master that the Nizam was going to interfere on his behalf; and Captain Malcolm wrote to me privately confirming this report. The Resident, however, had already written a spirited note to the Nizam's Minister requesting that these disreputable intrigues might be put an end to once for all, and the reply was all I could wish for. Orders were issued to seize Pid Naik's agent; but he had been evidently informed of his danger, and had made his escape.

I showed all these letters and documents to Pid Naik, who begged me to transmit a letter of apology to the Resident, denying that he had ever sent an agent, and requesting that if any person came hereafter, purporting to have been sent by him, or by his orders, he should be at once forwarded either to me or to himself.

That evening the young Rajah and Rajah Pid Naik came up to my house to hear the band of the 2d Regiment play on my terrace. It was a glorious moonlight night, and I had never seen Pid Naik so pleasant. In the morning, of his own accord, he sent all the treasury orders to be countersigned by me, and the accountants with all the accounts, imploring me to try and *save his credit*. It would have been poor spite in me to notice the past any longer. I did my best to set him upon his legs again, and I told him I intended to hold him up as long as he deserved it.

I believe the reason of this very sudden change for the better was that I took the fate of the rascal Krishnaya into my own hands, and placed him in confinement, heavily ironed, reporting proceedings *afterwards* to the Resident. I felt it was a case where decision was needed, and I exercised it at the risk of being found fault with. I considered it due to the welfare of the State, and the

safety of the Rajah and myself, to keep this mischievous character safe; as he was always inciting Pid Naik to some villany or other. Another evil influence was also at an end by the sudden death of Krishnaya's friend, Bheem Rao. He, it was said, took poison on hearing of Krishnaya's arrest, fearing awkward disclosures.

With the removal of these two, all opposition to me ceased, and, as I have said above, all my demands were complied with without further hesitation. Would it last? I often wondered; but I hoped Pid Naik had had a severe lesson, and that he had found both the Government and me too wary to look for success in any future plot.

The effect of all this was very successful; the first proof of the confidence it had inspired was given me in a very gratifying visit from the heads of the Beydur clans, who came to me with offerings of flowers, begging me to forget the past, and from henceforth to consider them as my children. I took the opportunity of making them a little speech, and with good effect. I told them it had pleased God to afflict me in the loss of my dear wife, and that I had no tie now to bind me to Shorapoor, except my wish to serve their young Rajah, and to do my duty to those who had sent

me there, and that it was very hard to have to bear all this anxiety and my own sorrow too. "Relieve me of that," I cried, "and you take a heavy load from me."

This touched them deeply; they crowded around me, placing their hands on my feet and neck, and earnestly exclaiming, "They would never *vex her spirit* by causing me pain or anxiety."

I saw my opportunity, and spoke at length. I warned them against crime—cattle-lifting and dacoity, both of which had before been considered honourable achievements—and I offered them advances for trade or for land cultivation to the utmost of my power. They listened very attentively, and I believe I won them entirely; having done so, I determined to keep them. When I had ended, I offered them *pan* and flowers, and sent them away.

Another proof of confidence in me was the increase of revenue in the contracts, the contractors having previously held back to see how matters would go. They would not give Pid Naik last year's amount; but they agreed with me for 13,000 rupees above it, which was no unwelcome addition to our finances. The crops promised well, both grain and cotton, and the price of grain rose from

12 to 20 rupees a *candy*, owing to the increased demand.

I endeavoured to show Pid Naik the folly of his previous course, which would have been to levy additional heavy taxes, that he proposed as soon as the people were at all more prosperous. For this year I was content to have a moderate increase of revenue, to bring speculation to light, and to see the people more contented and more happy.

Pid Naik and I worked away at the accounts, and he could do his work very well when he was not drunk !

The treasury arrangements were concluded, and the pay of the establishment settled, which amounted to 90,000 rupees a-year. The contingencies, which last year amounted to 73,000 rupees, would be only 25,000, and there were 100,000 set aside for Government demands and arrears. I had the control of the whole, and not one anna could be disbursed without my counter-signature.

I also, at *Pid Naik's request*, began several roads, which were much needed. I had to study road engineering as well as I could, and lay them out, and superintend the whole ; those leading from the several gates of the town were specially essential.

Shorapoor was a regular mountain fortress, a robber stronghold. To make it stronger than it was by nature, it had been fortified, and all the gates were rendered nearly impassable to any one except footmen by large loose stones being thrown down upon the passages to the plain. These had gradually become a horribly rough kind of pavement, so slippery and so loose that any horse unaccustomed to it tripped and stumbled at every step. No cart could have attempted to enter the town! Pid Naik's people had been laying out a road to the river Krishna, and part of it led over a gap in the hills, rough and bad. They told him they could not clear it, and advised him, to apply to me — hence his making this request, which had surprised me not a little. I instantly set thirty men to work, looking after them myself morning and evening. The road was now complete, twenty feet wide, and made of rotten granite, which became almost as hard as stone in a very short time.

When I had completed about 1200 yards all were delighted, and crowds came to see the wonder.

“Why not carry it through the gateways?” said some one.

“Why not?” I rejoined, “and then no more necks will be broken on those polished stones.”

Pid Naik assented, and I instantly put on additional workmen, thirty-five to each gate. From the gates the roads were carried through the town, and up to the Rajah's palace, and I could scarcely get them done quickly enough to satisfy the people. This was indeed a great step in the right direction. I had high hopes now, and even dreams of a good school, public dispensary, and suchlike institutions; but I was obliged to be very cautious.

One day we very nearly had a row. One of my English household shot a dog which was carrying off a fine fat duck in its mouth. The dog, it appeared, belonged to a Beydur. A body of these went off to Pid Naik to complain, and I told him to settle the matter as he pleased; but he would do nothing, and one of the scoundrels thought it a good opportunity to make a disturbance. So next morning, as Mr A—— was going into the town to see the Ranee's brother, he found about a hundred armed men on the road, who refused to let him pass, and threatened him. He came to me to make his complaint, and during that time about fifty men went to his tent and bullied his wife, terrifying her by yelling, screaming, and pointing their guns at her.

I wrote to Pid Naik at once that if these people

were not punished immediately I would leave Shorapoor; but I did not expect he would have the courage to do as I asked: however, to my surprise, the ringleaders were seized, and the row was put an end to. The whole had been a got-up affair to try and pick a quarrel with me, and had been instigated by one of Pid Naik's bosom friends and boon companions.

I wished to reach Linsoogoor in time for Christmas-day, and as I had a good deal to do before the year closed, I went out for a while into the districts, and worked very hard. From eight in the morning till eight in the evening people crowded in, and I only allowed myself half an hour for breakfast and dinner. It was weary work, neither gratifying nor amusing—a constant unveiling of acts of tyranny and oppression, lying and cheating; but it had to be done, and the more I worked, the more intricate it seemed to grow.

“Why,” said a fellow to me one day, quaintly enough, “do you take all this trouble in combing people's hair? You only break your combs, and don't get out the tanglements; the best way would be to shave it off and let it grow again, and then you could make it as smooth and straight as you please.” But this was rather too

severe a measure, and I preferred plying the comb with patience.

I had my reward in seeing the people more prosperous, and the trade of my little State increasing, and apparently in a fair way to become the highroad of commerce from the Company's districts into those of the Nizam and others. I lowered the duties, and the carriers were now protected at every halting-place by the very Beydurs who used to plunder them, steal their cattle, and annoy them in every way !

During this year there was not one single complaint of border outrage or cattle-lifting, and the country at large seemed to know that such doings must cease under the new *régime*. The people came forward boldly with their complaints, instead of going about in armed parties against those who had wronged them, burning their stacks of corn, and perhaps wounding or vexing inoffensive people in revenge for their injuries.

Pid Naik now was quiet and obedient, and having placed the expenditure on a proper footing, I trusted all would go on regularly in that department. I had as yet made no proper report on the state of affairs generally, but intended to do so after Christmas, on my return from Linsoogoor. I did make one special report on the state of the

accounts, showing the waste that had occurred, and the Resident agreed with me that it had been very deplorable ; but ended by saying, that as long as everything showed so fairly for the present, and as Pid Naik had no means of making up the deficiencies, and had listened to reason, he should be excused from any demand on account of it, and this was what I had myself proposed. I am sure this decision was a very great relief to Pid Naik himself, while to me the General wrote :

“ Your despatches contain ample proof of a most unwearied and unremitting attention to business, and a zeal in the discharge of the duties of your office that can scarcely fail to be attended with the happiest results. It may be expected that time and patience should be necessary for the purpose among a people so entirely unaccustomed to any kind of regular and just government.”

I left Shorapoor on the morning of the 24th December, at 1 A.M. Such glorious moonlight, as I well remember, and very cold. I was glad to stretch my legs with a walk of five miles, and arrived at Linsoogoor a little after sunrise.

And so the year 1844 ended—one very eventful to me—one full of sad, sad memories, and bitter, grievous trial. Yet through all I had been

strengthened and upheld by my heavenly Father to bear the burden He put upon me ; and He too, in answer to my earnest prayer, gave me courage and hope to cheer me on. I had, in some measure, succeeded beyond my hopes—I had won the hearty approbation of the highest in the land. I had gained, and was hourly gaining further, the confidence of the people ; they were more peaceful and content, improvements were progressing, trade and crops were promising. I had good health and constitution, and though often weary and sadly sick at heart, the thought that my efforts had so far succeeded gave me strength to fight on ; and somehow I had a liking for my work, and a certain pride in it, which carried me through many a difficult task. If I had not felt at times so unutterably lonely, I should have been quite happy ; but the thought of what I had lost in her who would have cheered and supported me, was at times almost too much to bear.

India, too, had made a great stride that year. Mercantile and other projects were advanced. A new Steam Navigation Company was started, the shares in which were bought up directly ; so with the banks, of which there were three, if not more, in North-western India, and others in Bengal, Bombay, and Madras, all doing well, and paying

interest at 10 or 12 per cent on their original capital. Also there was the plan for the Bombay Railway, of which all the shares were snapped up by English and Indian capitalists. Yes, India was stirring in these respects, and was likely to advance in all peaceful undertakings under our veteran General, who apparently thought of anything but fighting, and busied himself with roads, bridges, education, and trade—one and all of which his predecessor seemed to think out of his line altogether, and perhaps beneath his notice.

The new year opened brightly enough. On my return to Shorapoor I found the Rajah well and happy; and as I had persuaded some of my friends to accompany me from Linsoogoor to see my house and my little State, I had quite a gay time of it. My party consisted of three ladies and four gentlemen, and their advent created quite a commotion in the town. We pitched our tents at Bohnal, a small village seven miles west from Shorapoor, where there was a very pretty tank or artificial lake, of considerable size.

I had drawn out a plan for a sailing-boat of tolerably large dimensions, and had had her built at Linsoogoor; and finding her quite finished, I put her on a heavy artillery-waggon, and conveyed

her to Bohnal with many a misgiving, as she had been built altogether by the drawings I had given. She was now quite ready to make a start, and was put into the water on her trial trip, and I was very glad to have so large a gathering on the occasion. We awaited the great event with much anxiety, and it was looked for by all the natives with intense curiosity and eagerness. First, out came the Ranee and all the *élite* of Shorapoor, to have a look at the boat, and their admiration was unbounded, and most amusing. As to the little Rajah, he was wild with delight, and hugged me with all his might for having made the boat for him. The Ranee was for being out half the day; and once, when there was "a bit of a sea," and the little vessel was dashing through the water, throwing up the spray about her bows, she was in absolute glee. She, the English ladies, and the children, went out thus with me two days running, and great was the fun and merriment among us all.

It was certainly an unprecedented thing for the Ranee and me to be together in the "same boat;" and it was wonderful to see how the native ladies, wild and secluded as had been their life hitherto, opened out under the influence and companionship of their English sisters. Indeed my

friends told me they had imagined the Ranee a perfect tigress, and that they were most agreeably surprised to find her so pleasant and so polite. My boat had turned out a pretty thing—20 feet keel, and 24 feet over all, a good beam, and three masts—old Liverpool ferry-boat fashion—a bowsprit and jib, topmast and sails. She was very stiff in the water, and very safe; in fact, she worked well, and was beautifully finished in every respect, built of teak, copper-fastened throughout; yet she had been entirely the work of two common carpenters of the country. I felt rather proud of my first experiment in ship-building; and my boat was a constant source of amusement and recreation, as, although the lake was not very large, it was sufficiently so for an hour or two's sail in the evenings when work was done. It was about a mile across, and one and a-half long. Its depth, when full, was 20 feet; but as the "Rajah" only drew $2\frac{1}{2}$ or 3 feet, there was always plenty of water for her. The exclamations of the natives were very amusing sometimes. "Dear me," said one, after we had been sailing along briskly for some time, "see how that grass is running! was ever such a thing seen before!"

"But," said another, "that hill is moving

away, and there goes a tree! Well, to be sure, it is miraculous!"

And so they would go on till I convinced them of the truth.

My party soon broke up. They expressed themselves charmed with the novelty and beauty of all they had seen, and it certainly must have been a change from the dull routine and gossip of station life.

I determined to build a cottage at Bohnal for a refuge from toil at Shorapoor, and before I left I marked out the foundation. It was to consist only of two rooms and a small bath-room, with a veranda round them. The view was very pretty, looking over to the old fort of Wagingera, and across a wide plain with the Deodroog Hills in the distance. Stone was to be had for the picking up, lime was plentiful, as also was long grass for thatching, so that the cost was very moderate.

I made a contract for a road between Bohnal and Shorapoor, which promised to be very pretty, as there was a good deal of wood and firm red soil, and I hoped that all these plans and projects of mine would in time produce a civilising effect upon the natives and induce them to follow my example.

I now returned to my district work, and the conflicts over false returns were as troublesome as before. Still I observed a good deal of progress, and the demand for taking up waste lands was very great. Numbers of old Shorapoor families had returned to their villages, and there seemed to be abundance and prosperity everywhere. An insurrection had broken out in the month of February in the southern Mahratta country, and the British authorities were most anxious about the Beydurs of Shorapoor, as the movement was within sixty miles of them, and had they joined in it, things might have taken a very serious turn. I lost no time in sending an urgent appeal to them all, not to be enticed into the rebellion; and they responded most warmly and joyfully, and proved their loyalty to me in the most practical manner, as not one Beydur of my district joined the rebellion. At last I felt I had them well in hand, and I know that the Bombay Government were very thankful to me for my control over so formidable a body.

In March another great ceremony took place—the first removal of the young Rajah's hair! It is usual in some Mussulman, and most Hindoo, families, not to cut the hair of a male child until he has attained a certain age. In the Rajah's

case, his father and mother had fixed the period at nine, eleven, or fourteen years of age. It had not been done in the ninth year, and the present was the eleventh, which could not be passed over, and I was glad of it, for the boy suffered greatly from the weight and heat of the tangled and matted hair falling about his shoulders.

As this was a state ceremony, I requested the Resident to allow me to bestow what was needful in the way of funds, and I was permitted to give the Ranee five thousand rupees from the State treasury, to which sum she added as much of her own, and the following is the description of the affair which I sent home :—

“There was a great gathering of all classes of people to partake of the Ranee’s hospitality. I don’t know how many Brahmins and others were invited ; all were fed and received gifts of clothes and alms. The crowds were enormous. All the members of the family were feasted for two days, and received turbans, scarves, and other presents, and every one seemed pleased and happy. The ceremony itself took place in a tamarind-grove near a suburb in the plain on the south side of Shorapoor ; the Ranee had had comfortable tents arranged for me, and I arrived from camp in time for the beginning of it. I did not see what

was taking place, as no one entered the enclosure but the Brahmins; but the beating of kettle-drums, blowing of horns, and firing of guns, announced the ceremony completed. I was sitting with the Ranee the whole time, and she was very thankful to me for my presence there, and the assistance I had been allowed to give.

“As the camp could not move into the city that night, I remained, and there was a grand *nautch* under the trees, and fireworks, which had a very pretty effect, the whole grove being lighted by torches, with occasional Bengal and blue lights. Next evening all went up to the city in grand procession. The Rajah on his superb elephant, with his little wife beside him, who had arrived from the Mysore country just in time. She is rather dark, but a pretty child about eight, with glorious eyes. I rode and *drove* another elephant, and we were surrounded by all the horsemen and foot-soldiers, and the Beydur clans. Such a scramble! When we got into the city we were joined by others, and there were literally thousands, and all the house-tops were covered with well-dressed women and children. By this time it was dark, but there were hundreds of torches and blue lights; and the effect of the crowds in the streets, the horsemen,

and the women on the flat roofs, was very fine. It was the best procession I have seen. We proceeded to the great temple, where the Rajah and his people went to return thanks and make offerings. I remained as I was. I joined them afterwards, when we all went on to the palace; and after sitting a short time in Durbar, the little Rajah told me he was very tired, as well he might be—so I broke up the assembly, and took him to his mother, thanked her for her hospitality and came away. I stayed the next day at Shorapoor, because Pid Naik was beginning his old tricks of spending money without authorisation. He complained that his people did it—they would not listen to his advice or orders; and the latter was the truth. What could I do but preach and caution? I found the little Rajah getting on very fairly, and I send you a note of his in English as a specimen. He reads easy stories nicely; but is best in Teloogoo and Mahratta, which, after all, he needs most. Would that I could send him to England! but that is impossible.”

Inquiry had been in progress at Hyderabad regarding the alleged debt to the Gosain bankers; and a suspicion arose in the minds of the Resident and Captain Malcolm that the interpolation of *one line* in the Mahratta document was

a forgery. This provided a bonus of 15,000 rupees on one transaction, and interest at two per cent per month on the whole; and the bonds were sent down to me. There could be no possible doubt of the forgery. The writing, and the colour of the ink, were quite different from those of the remainder of the document. I took the deposition of the clerk who had written the paper, and he declared at once that the line in question had been interpolated, and that the writing was not his. The original draft of the bond was then produced. I took depositions from a number of experts, and also from all the secretaries and clerks who were present when the bonds were written and sealed—all unanimously declared the line to be an addition, and false. If the forgery could be proved, the State would be relieved of debt with interest to the amount of two lakhs, or £20,000.

These inquiries led me into an investigation of the sums paid by the Shorapoor State for fifty-two years to the Nizam's Government, and I found it to have been no less than one crore and seventy-nine lakhs (£1,790,000), on various pretences; whereas all it was entitled to was $50,000 \times 52 = 26,000,000$ —twenty-six lakhs only (£260,000); so that the excess paid to the Ni-

zam's Government was £1,530,000, and yet more was required! My father very naturally asked me what law there was in Shorapoor, and I find I wrote as follows:—

“As to administration of justice, it lies entirely in my hands. Pid Naik will do nothing. He does not see the necessity of any law or justice; therefore I have to decide all minor cases myself. No court of justice has *ever* existed in Shorapoor; but the people are used to *punchayets* or arbitrations, which seem very fair. They are properly courts of five members—two plaintiffs, two defendants, and one person named by them; but here as many as will, sit—and their judgments are really excellent.”

In June I was rendered very anxious by a report from Hyderabad, apparently to be relied on, that a Bengal civilian was to be sent to Shorapoor, which was to be entirely severed from Hyderabad. This, it was said, had been resolved on by the Court of Directors, on the examination of correspondence for many years past, and the discovery that the security Government had entered into for the Shorapoor State amounted now to £90,000.

It was strange that no answer had been given either to the Resident's despatches or my own, on the subject of Shorapoor management, for upwards

of a year now; neither he nor I knew whether we were doing right or doing wrong—we had only acted to the best of our judgment and capacity; but for some time past I had begun to find the Resident very reticent, and apparently unwilling to take further responsibility on himself.

For my own part, I was satisfied I had done my duty to the utmost of my power. I had reported all irregularities and their consequences; I had requested special and detailed instructions as to the wishes of Government, and I had received none beyond what I have already given here. Lord Hardinge was now Governor-General. I wrote to his private secretary, and pleaded what I had already done; showed what further measures I had in view, and their results, for the good of the State, if they were carried out; and left my case in the hands of the Governor-General, awaiting an answer with considerable anxiety.

It came at length, and was unfavourable. It ran as follows:—

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“DEAR SIR,—In reply to your letter of the 12th instant, I am directed to state that the arrangements contemplated by the Governor-General for the arrangement of the Shorapoor affairs will require the appointment of another

agent unconnected with the recent events which have passed in that State, and I very much regret that I cannot hold out any expectations that the retention of your services will come within the scope of the measures now under consideration.” (Signed) “C. S. HARDINGE,

Private Secy.

“CALCUTTA, 28th May 1845.”

However, I was determined not to let the matter rest here. What I had at first written was in general terms ; what I wrote the second time were more particulars referring to the many despatches I had forwarded, in which I had made urgent application for the instructions of Government as to the arrangements of the Shorapoor State. This letter, like the first one, was transmitted through the Resident, General Fraser, and he wrote a long despatch on the subject, which, Captain Malcolm informed me, was the clearest and most complete State paper he had ever seen from the Resident's pen.

As many small matters constantly arose which required references to the Nizam's Government, and also in regard to other local business, I had maintained an agent at Hyderabad, by permission of the Resident, and the Nizam's Minister, Suraj-

ool-Moolk ; and my agent now reported that he had been directed by the Minister to acquaint me with what had occurred at the Nizam's court in reference to Shorapoor ; and this was the substance of his communication.

The Governor-General had applied to the Nizam to have the State of Shorapoor made over to the British Government during the minority of the Rajah, and to have all its affairs managed quite independently of the Nizam's Government and of the Resident.

To this the Minister, Suraj-ool-Moolk, had replied, by direction of the Nizam, that Shorapoor was a State tributary to him, and not to the Hon. E.I. Company, and had been so recognised in the treaties.

That when the late Rajah died, his Government had made no opposition to the appointment of a "Dewan ;" and if the Company were dissatisfied with him, he should receive no support from Hyderabad, and might be removed from office at the pleasure of the Company.

That no opposition had been offered by the Nizam's Government to my appointment ; and as I had hitherto acted in the interests of both Governments, being a servant of both, so I ought to be allowed to continue to act, the Nizam's

Government, on its part, having perfect confidence in me.

That the Nizam's Government could not see on what principles the British Government could take its tributary out of its hands, especially as there was now profound peace at Shorapoor.

"If" (I quote from one of my letters to England) "the Nizam's Government has really written this, as I am informed, I cannot but think it will have its effect upon the Government of India; and it tallies with what Captain Malcolm wrote to me some time ago, that the Nizam had sent a crusty note about Shorapoor, and my agent was told the purport of it as above, with orders from the Minister to tell it or write it to me on the first opportunity.

"Meanwhile a new subject of anxiety to Government has sprung up. I wrote last month that Pid Naik was very ill of combined drunkenness and disease, and that I did not expect him to live. He has lived, however, but at the expense of his intellect. He is now quite foolish, sometimes insane. His people have sent for two Musulmans, who are famed for making charms and amulets, and the belief is that he is bewitched. With one charm he rubs his eyes, another is burnt by his bed, a third is washed off the paper,

and he drinks it. My apothecary reported some time ago that he had an attack of *delirium tremens*, which, as no one here knew how to treat it, has resulted in insanity. When I went to see him, a few days ago, he knew me; but I could not make him understand, except that, when I asked him about his seal of office, he said, ‘Do you use it while I am ill.’ I have reported all to Government; but until the larger questions are settled, the lesser ones lie by. It is useless to enter upon speculations: God only knows what turn things will take; and to Him I have committed all, most sure that, whatever His will is, it is good.

“Since I last wrote, my new road has been completed, and it is the best and prettiest I have ever made, the ground being so nicely wooded. My greatest achievement has been the driving of my new phaeton to the end of the road every morning to exercise the horses and look after the workmen, and it ran beautifully, and indeed is, I flatter myself, a very stylish thing. The horses did not like the hills at first, but now are quite accustomed to them, and I shall soon take the little Rajah out with me for a drive.

“This new road has opened out Shorapoor completely: all the artillery and troops in the

kingdom could march straight through it without difficulty. I have been finishing a picture of Shorapoor for you in oils, and I hope it will give you some idea of the town. In the foreground is the Rajah on horseback, attended by his usual retinue, nearly a hundred figures. I have attended closely to detail and costume in those nearest the eye. It is perhaps too ambitious a subject for me; but I have done my best, and it has afforded me much amusement and pleasure. I have also been attempting my own portrait for the Rajah, who wished very much to have it."

The cholera broke out with great severity during the months of June and July. When I returned from a short holiday I had taken to Linsoogoor, it was still very prevalent, attacking children very fatally, and in fact sparing neither age nor sex. Fully five hundred souls were swept off in Shorapoor alone. On one day I remember fifty-one persons died, and for several days the average was twenty to thirty per day. Thank God! the disorder did not come up my hill, but was confined to the town below. A good fall of rain checked it, and it ceased as suddenly as it came.

The people were greatly rejoiced at its de-

parture, and there was much sacrificing of sheep and buffaloes, and, rather to my dismay, the clans of the Twelve Thousand asked my permission to hold a grand sacrifice to their ancient divinities in Shorapoor, which do not belong to Hindooism, but are remnants of original beliefs. The authorities came to me in a great fright and said this *pooja** had not taken place for eighteen years, and that on the last occasion the Beydurs had fought among themselves, and that some of the State soldiers had likewise been killed and wounded; and that if the ceremony were allowed, guards must be posted around the place of sacrifice.

"But," I said, "why do you not trust the Beydurs?"

"They are not to be trusted," was the reply.

I, however, sent for the head Beydurs and told them if they would promise *by my feet* not to make a disturbance, I would let them have their *pooja*, and feed them well; and as their little Rajah was a child, and the Dewan, Rajah Pid Naik, ill and imbecile, they had only me to look to, and I hoped that as I was about to place great confidence in them, they would not disappoint me. They declared they would not.

* *Pooja*—worship, a religious function.

“Send one of your *chuprassies* to us,” they said, “and he will be as much as an army.”

So I sent the one *chuprassie*, and one or two steady old Brahmins who knew the people. About 6000 Beydurs assembled. There was plenty to eat and drink. About 400 sheep and 50 buffaloes were killed during the ceremonies ; and there was not one drunken man in the streets, nor a quarrelsome word spoken, yet all were armed to the teeth ! I wondered whether at a gathering of Irish, or English even, such order would have prevailed.

I had never before been so perfectly satisfied with the Beydurs, and was very glad to be able to forward good accounts of their steady behaviour to Hyderabad. I had felt great anxiety, owing to the evident reluctance of the authorities of the place to have this *pooja* ; but I knew if I flinched at all, or had put them off with promises, there might have arisen ill-feeling against me. Now all was right—and fortunately a good deal of rain fell, which was attributed to the goddess being pleased.

The great suspense I had now for some time been enduring, was happily relieved on the 19th July by a private letter from General Fraser, which ran as follows :—

“MY DEAR TAYLOR,—I have several times informed you that the whole circumstances of your removal from Shorapoor were to me a perfect and most unintelligible mystery, and I am happy to tell you that I have just received the extract of a despatch from the Court of Directors to the Supreme Government, of 19th March 1845, in which the whole of your conduct is spoken of in the highest terms. This, with some other matters, will form the subject of an official communication from me to you in the course of to-morrow or next day.

“It gives me great and sincere pleasure to add that the Government have intimated to me that, pending the receipt of the honourable Court’s reply to a letter from Government, dated 12th April last, the Governor-General in Council has determined to suspend the resolution which related to your removal from Shorapoor and the appointment of another officer. On this latter part of the subject, however, it is not probable that I shall have occasion to address you officially, as I do not think I have ever informed you officially of the resolution of Government to remove you.—Believe me, my dear Taylor, ever sincerely yours.

“ J. S. FRASER, *Resident.*”

“*P.S.*—I have just received your letter of the 12th. I think you ought to report to me officially the good conduct of the Beydurs on occasion of the late grand *pooja*. This is very creditable to yourself personally, and I shall be glad to report it for the information of the Supreme Government.”

The official despatch which came from the Court of Directors is too long for insertion *in extenso*, but I subjoin a few extracts.

Extract from a despatch from the Honourable the Court of Directors, No. 9, dated March 19, 1845.

Para. 64. “Captain Taylor’s reports, dated 30th December 1843 and 18th January 1844, afford very favourable indications of his capacity for the task intrusted to him, that of reforming the administration of a State always one of the most backward of the petty States of India, and now much debilitated in condition by over-exaction and other mismanagement.”

“In this difficult enterprise Captain Taylor seems to be in no respect aided, and in some degree thwarted, by the Dewan, Pid Naik, who, from indolence and weakness, rather than from

evil intention, is, though profuse in promises, sparing in performance. If Captain Taylor's ability and perseverance should fail in sufficiently overcoming this obstacle, Pid Naik must be reminded that he occupies his position solely by your appointment, and that not he but your Government is the guardian of the young Rajah and real regent of the State. At the same time, Captain Taylor should by no means lose sight of the importance of maintaining a good understanding with Pid Naik. Great allowance must be made for the natural mortification of that personage at his supersession in the supreme authority which, on being nominated Dewan, he expected to exercise. His rank in the State must render the tone of feeling displayed by him greatly influential in the country, and the measures of Captain Taylor cannot fail to be more acceptable to the population, if taken with his concurrence and approval. Captain Taylor therefore should endeavour to conciliate his co-operation by every token of conciliation and respect."

Then follows approval of my plans and arrangements for the collection of revenue, leasing lands on five years' leases, and inducing the ryots and weavers to return, and proceeds:—

"We are of opinion that it is both right, and the

duty of our Government as the Rajah's guardian, to do what, according to the ideas and practice of the country, he will have a full right to do when he assumes the Government—namely, to resume all alienations of revenue which were either excessive in amount or improperly bestowed. The time and mode of effecting such resumptions, and the extent to which they should be carried, are subjects for the consideration of the local authorities under your general guidance.

67. "Captain Taylor's attention is vigilantly directed to the reduction of expenses, and he has proposed a schedule of expenditure amounting only to one lakh instead of 179,303 rupees as formerly,—independent, however, of all payments to the Nizam's Government and creditors.

68. "We are glad to observe that Rajah Pid Naik's opposition will not be allowed to defeat the needful arrangements for the young Rajah's education and gradual initiation into public business.

70. "Captain Taylor has hitherto abstained very properly from introducing any judicial changes, the revenue system and the regulation of the public expenditure being matters of more immediate urgency. When these subjects, however, shall no longer engross his attention, we shall hope that he has been able to introduce

some tolerably constituted court of criminal justice. Heretofore, he says, there does not appear to have been any administration of justice whatever. There is no kind of court, civil or criminal. The place, however, of civil courts, is in some degree supplied by the ordinary native expedient of *punchayet*.

“True extract.

F. CURRIE,

Secretary to Government of India.”

Rajah Pid Naik's earthly career was fast closing now. He was not only very dangerously and incurably ill, but the following correspondence will show that the Government of India had at last come to the determination of dispensing with his services:—

From F. Currie, Esq., Secretary to the Government of India, to Major-General Fraser, Resident at Hyderabad.

“FORT-WILLIAM, 18th July 1845.

“SIR,—I have received, and laid before the Governor-General in Council, your two letters of 10th and 27th ult., Nos. 64 and 69, with enclosures from Captain Taylor, and in reply I am directed to state that the Governor-General in Council authorises your instructing that officer to set

aside Rajah Pid Naik entirely should he be living when you receive these orders. And his Excellency directs that Captain Taylor assume the entire charge of the administration of the Sumusthan pending further orders, which, as instructed to you in my letter of the 4th inst., No. 1913, will be communicated to you on receipt of the sentiments of the Honble. the Court of Directors on the affairs of Shorapoor.—I have, &c.

F. CURRIE, *Secy. to Govt.*”

General Fraser wrote as follows on July 30th :—

“ I have the honour to transmit for your information and guidance the accompanying letter from the Secretary to the Government of India to my address, No. 2024, under date the 18th inst.

2. “ It may be almost superfluous that I should suggest to you the propriety of carrying into effect the measures therein directed, with every consistent regard for the feelings of Pid Naik, and in such a delicate and cautious manner as shall avoid giving any offence or jealous suspicion to the Beydur population or other inhabitants of the Shorapoor Sumusthan.—I have, &c.

“ J. S. FRASER, *Resident.*”

I found it, however, quite a hopeless task to communicate the contents of this letter to Rajah Pid Naik, who lingered on, suffering from the effects of his paralytic seizure, and was now both speechless and insensible. He lived till the 8th of August, and then died without apparently further suffering. I went to visit him a few days before he breathed his last, and as he revived a little, his sons believed him to be sensible. I think, perhaps, he was conscious for a few moments, for he took my hand in one of his, while he passed the other all over my face and person, trying the while to speak, but no articulate sound came from his lips. I promised his sons, who were in bitter grief, that I would return if he revived at all; but he did not, and passed away quite quietly.

I made every arrangement for his obsequies, and for the expenses necessary for their performance; and the morning after his death attended the funeral in full dress as a mark of respect. When I went to the house, I found the late Rajah dressed in rich garments, with all his jewels on, set out on a terrace in the courtyard, the body placed leaning against a wall, and seated on his velvet cushion of state, and his sword and shield lying beside him. The face was disfigured

by paralysis, bloated, and under the pale hue of death was most distressing to see ; but all his retainers, many of the chiefs of clans, and friends were bidding him a last farewell, and were saluting him. When the ceremony was concluded, the body was taken up, and placed sitting in an open chair, and then, taking his two eldest sons by the hand, I led them after him, amidst the firing of guns and the wailing of the crowds all around us, to the place of cremation, where, divested of its jewels, the body was placed on the pyre, to which the eldest son applied the first torch ; and as the wood had been thoroughly saturated with oil and *ghee*, or boiled butter, together with camphor and incense, it burst into a fierce blaze, and the cremation was soon complete. I remained with the boys till all the ceremonies were ended, and then conducted them home,—paid a visit of condolence to the sorrowing widow, and then took my leave.

It would have been indelicate, it appeared to me, to open the subject of my succession at once ; but when the first few days of mourning had expired, I held a court, in order to explain publicly what I had previously made known privately to all.

There was at first some little difficulty with

the heads of departments. I laid down my plan of proceeding very decidedly, and adhered to it. At first they greatly wished that the Ranee should have a voice in all that went on, and that nothing should be done without her concurrence. A few trifling orders even had been given in her name; but I cut all this very short, and distinctly stated that I would stand no sort of interference whatever; and to put an end to all controversy on the subject, I went to visit the Ranee after my Durbar was over, and she protested vehemently, not only that she would never attempt to hinder me in any way, but, on the contrary, that she would assist me to the utmost of her power. .

I arranged that the State seal with my signature was to be the only authorised authority for documents in the State. The seal was a mere matter of form, as all orders, receipts, and the like, were examined during the week, and on Monday mornings were produced, and explained to the little Rajah, and sealed up in his presence, so as to show the people that he was in reality considered their Rajah, and the head of the State. The people were glad to see him put forward, and all discontent soon subsided. Even the keys of the treasury were brought up every night and

put under my pillow ; and those of the stores and groceries were kept by the Ranee, as she wished to have them.

Another great blessing was vouchsafed to us ; a plenteous rain fell at last, which had been sorely needed. Grain had risen in price, and I was growing anxious, for a famine seemed inevitable. The young leaves of the early grain were withering ; but still all knew if rain fell it would sprout again. The wells were dry ; but they filled rapidly, and in a few days the grain looked green again, and everything seemed cheerful. My lake at Bohnal was now really a noble sheet of water—good two miles from corner to corner, and six feet more in depth than the previous year. As if, too, all I had endeavoured to effect had taken place at once, I heard privately from Captain Malcolm that the Nizam was about to remit the payment of four lakhs and a half, which was still due on the old accounts. He had seen the Minister's draft of an official note on the subject, and assured me I should soon have it officially. I need not say how great a relief it would be to me when it came.

I continued to pay frequent visits to the Ranee, and took her and the Rajah drives in my new carriage. Her ecstasies were very great, and her

remarks most amusing when she was driven to places where she had never been before. I visited Rajah Pid Naik's family also very often. He had left no will, nor any directions as to the disposal of his property or estates; and as, several times when he was sensible, he had put the hands of his wife and children into mine before all his people, so now they all requested that I would take sole charge of their estates and affairs, and manage them for the benefit of all—and I consented. The head steward and accountant, with all their papers, were then made over to me, and so long as I had charge of their affairs I never had trouble with any of the family.

Poor Pid Naik! with many faults he had many kindly qualities; but he was utterly unstable, quite unable to resist temptation, and too obstinate and puffed up by the people about him to attend to orders issued by Government. He fancied himself Rajah of Shorapoor, and at heart desired to gain the succession for his eldest son. Brahmins, mostly of bad character, had obtained complete ascendancy over him, and he was too weak, and too credulous and superstitious, to resist their suggestions. I do not think he ever went into extreme wrong but once, when, if he did not actually embrace crime, he certainly

shook hands with it. The temptation was great, for if the Rajah had been killed, his son would have become Rajah in his stead. Pid Naik left eight children,—six by his excellent wife Mádama, one by the other wife, and another illegitimate.

CHAPTER X.

1846.

I WAS obliged to be absent for a short time on private business, and there had been many attempts made to induce the Ranee to defy my authority, but as yet she appeared firm. She had, however, set up a new paramour, one of the menials, and under such circumstances was not to be depended upon, and I was obliged to watch very narrowly. Not long after my return to Shorapoor a letter was intercepted by one of my Beydurs, who had obtained it for a few rupees from the messenger that was to have taken it to Hyderabad. The writing and the seal were those of an old Brahmin of rank, who I knew aspired to be head manager under the Ranee, and the letter was addressed to one of the Nizam's confidential servants, urging him to send 1200 Arabs and Rohillas without delay.

Before the copy of the letter and my report could reach General Fraser by express, Captain Malcolm wrote to me privately that 400 Arabs had actually left Hyderabad, and begged me to stop them.

I showed this letter to the Ranee in confidence, and warned her; but she protested entire innocence, and the old Brahmin suddenly and mysteriously disappeared. I found out that my absence had been interpreted as a recall, and that the Ranee had been making profuse promises to her adherents; but I took no notice of these stupid intrigues, which could only be stopped when they came to a crisis. The authorities at Hyderabad were very busy sifting this plot, and its intrigues seemed interminable.

The year 1845 closed pleasantly for me. In the first place, General Fraser sent me a copy of a despatch which he had received from the Secretary to Government on the subject of Shorapoor affairs, which was very gratifying, as the first from Sir Henry Hardinge.

“ Foreign Department.

“ Dated CAMP ZEIT, 7th November 1845.

“ SIR,—I have received and laid before the Governor-General your despatch, dated 17th Oc-

tober last, No. 129, submitting copies of correspondence with Captain Taylor in regard to the Shorapoor Sumusthan.

“In reply, I am desired to state that his Excellency does not consider, after perusal of the papers submitted, that they call for any orders from him beyond the expression of his opinion that Captain Taylor would appear to have shown zeal, ability, and judgment in the conduct of the affairs of the Sumusthan during the past season.—I have, &c. F. CURRIE, *Secy.*”

Lastly, it had pleased God to grant to the people one of the finest harvests ever remembered, though in the beginning of the season the anxiety, owing to the want of rain, had been so great; and what could be a happier opening for 1846 than a cheery letter from my father, bringing good news of all my dear ones at home? I had recovered from a sharp fit of fever and ague, which left me as weak as a child for a time; and the people were orderly and quiet through the country—no cattle-lifting, no robberies or outrages—and some of the most notorious thieves and robbers had taken to farming quietly and contentedly, and I endeavoured to encourage more to follow their good example.

The Ranee and her intrigues were the only cause of anxiety, and she certainly was in a queer humour, exalting her new favourite with all her might and main in the most shameless manner; but the townspeople seemed quite weary of her profligacy, and were very gentle and perfectly easy to manage; but I never saw in any place, or among any natives, morality at so low an ebb among the higher classes, or such entire absence of the commonest truth and honesty. I often felt there was no chance for the poor young Rajah among them all. I went out into the districts as usual, and got through all my routine of work just the same as the year before, and a few extracts will suffice.

“*February* 1846.—I got to my camp all right, and yesterday moved on to Andola, six miles. Such fields of *jowaree*! such glorious crops I never saw before, and the people say have not existed for ten years. One ear of *jowaree* I pulled, which contained a countless number of grains, all nearly ripe, and like so many pearls. The cotton, too, is very fair, but not quite so fine as the *jowaree* perhaps; and there is a good local demand for manufacture on the spot, so my farmers will make a handsome profit.

“All hands are very grateful to God. Their worship is not ours, but their gratitude is the same, and we may well hope will find acceptance in His sight. . . .

“I don’t know how *jowaree* would mix with wheaten flour. I don’t think it would rise, as the flour wants the gluten of wheat; but it is highly nutritious, as the robust frames of our peasantry testify—no fat, all sinews and muscle,—enduring vagabonds as ever helped at a border fray or drove their neighbours’ cattle. Now, all are as quiet as mice. . . .

“I am informed that the Rance is now in great admiration of me, and swears she will have nothing to do with any nonsense such as was going on. I wonder what she means, and what is in the wind now!

“The Governor-General’s hands just now are too full of the Sikh war to attend to anything else, and the post has brought the news of the victory over them, about which I was not a little anxious. . . .

“*February 24th.*—Bitter cold wind till noon; worked hard all day. In the evening I went into the village, carpets were spread on the terrace, and we had a *nautch*. I sat in state for an hour, and then went and saw the children who

had been married : one about eleven, very pretty and fair for a native ; she came and sat in my lap very confidingly, but would not open her eyes till I put my watch to her ear, showed her the works, and the ‘tic tic’ within. Such eyes they were ! well worthy to be painted. The other was a sly puss, but came at last to me. Then fireworks, and I took my leave. . . .

“The General has authorised a new line of post, which has saved me at least three days, and is a great comfort. Are not these wonderful victories over the Sikhs ? The Peninsula can hardly boast a more brilliant series. We have fought no such battles in India before. . . .

“I have quite secured the additional revenue I hoped for ; altogether my accounts will show 30,000 rupees extra over last year, and I hope the big folks will be satisfied.” . . .

On the 24th April, as the heat was very great, with scarcely any shade, and the thermometer averaging from 125° to 127°, I returned to Shorapoor. There was also another very severe visitation of cholera, and the poor little Rajah was very ill, with terrible inflammation and supuration of the glands of his neck. Native

remedies had proved useless, so I insisted upon being allowed to see what I could do, and I sent to Linsoogoor for some leeches, which I applied, and afterwards lanced the place, putting on soothing poultices. He slept all that night, and he recovered his health and strength, which had been greatly reduced; and I believe my renown as a physician was widespread.

There were great rejoicings on the recovery of the Rajah, and among other entertainments a Hindoo play, which I had never seen before, taken from the Bhagwat, or recitation of the poem relating to Krishna.

The chief performer was a handsome young girl, who was a capital actress and singer, very richly dressed. She personated one of Krishna's wives, lamenting his absence from her. The text was all given in recitation, with here and there an air and chorus, the language, Canarese, which I could not follow. One plaintive air with a chorus was excellently given, and I wish I had been able to take it down. Her acting was admirable: grief, sadness, hope, jealousy, despair, all depicted in turn, and her joy at the last when she found she had been tormenting herself for nothing after all! Yet the whole was performed by stone-cut-

ters, who could neither read nor write ; and the plays had been learned by rote, and were traditional in their families.

Some of the Hindoo dramas acted in this way must be very beautiful. Sir William Jones has translated "Sakontala," "The Toy Cart," and others admirably. Rude as it may appear, one can trace the ancient system of chorus—the actor appealing to the chorus—and the chorus answering the actor or actress, advising, pitying, &c. That which I saw was not strictly a play, but one of the sacred books dramatised. There were comic interludes, to enable the female performers to rest, and these, too, were very clever. Altogether, the children, for whose entertainment it was given, were highly delighted, and so was I ; and we all sat on the ground together.

It seems absurd to mention more intrigues, but I was forced to check one which was growing troublesome. The head of the *duftar*, or account department, one of the chief peculators in Pid Naik's time, set himself up as the Ranee's champion, and she gave him valuable presents, and abetted him very shamelessly. At last he took it on himself to declare to her that he had been appointed by the Nizam her Minister, and gave her a sum of money out of the treasury.

This could not be allowed. I therefore suspended him, put the *duftar* papers into the hands of the real hereditary head of the office, a clever young fellow, and sent the defaulter to his house, under a guard of twenty of my Beydurs, who kept him safely. No one grieved at his degradation, for he had been insolent to all classes.

In a few days the Ranee came to me, and was very penitent, wept very much, and promised to be so good in future; but I cannot say I trusted the lady!

From the first I had determined to allow no outsiders in hereditary offices. I had to teach those who held these posts what their duty was and how to keep systematic accounts. I had a day-book and a ledger in the treasury, and they were kept very neatly and correctly. On examination at the end of the financial year, I found that, after paying the Nizam's tribute and other debts and arrears, I had still 70,000 rupees of surplus balance, notwithstanding all the extra expenses of the family in ceremonials which could neither be delayed nor avoided. The account stood thus in the final reckoning of the year:—

Total revenue,	Rs. 321,716 10 6
Total expenditure,	246,818 4 3
Balance in favour of the State, .	74,898 6 3

Of this General Fraser sent me ample approval, which I need not copy in detail; the concluding paragraph shows the spirit in which he wrote.

“The mode of accounts which you have adopted is clear and explicit, and appears well calculated to afford that information to the Supreme Government which it will no doubt desire to possess. With regard to your management of Shorapoor, I highly approve of the zeal, ability, and unremitting exertion with which you discharge the duties of your present important office, and your gradual establishment of order and well-regulated administration in a district hitherto proverbial for maladministration, corruption, and every species of disorder.”

(Sd.) “J. S. F.”

I find that but little of interest took place during the remainder of that year. All was flourishing and peaceful. Now and then petty intrigues occurred on the part of one or another. Luchmangeer and the lady herself were generally at the bottom of the mischief, or her paramour Kasima. He indeed disseminated ill-will between two sections of the Beydurs, with a view to set them all by the ears, and thereby to bring disrepute on me. There

was a small riot in the town, and some grain-dealers' shops were injured; but the offenders came to me and "begged pardon" like naughty boys. Happily in November Luchmangeer was summoned to Hyderabad, and I obliged him to go and we had some peace.

Among themselves the Beydurs were rather at strife, one accusing another of having more land than he ought to possess, and suchlike disputes. However, with these I never interfered. I was too weak, and they knew it, to break up a clannish faction of 12,000 men and more, who held the finest lands in all the villages, and so long as they were orderly, it was all I required. Had any serious quarrel arisen I must have interfered, and I often told them it was to their interest in the end to keep together and remain peaceable.

Rather a curious incident occurred during this year. A Brahmin, who had been absent from Shorapoor for two years, came to me, and said that he had cast up the table of my nativity, and had brought me the result. As I had never seen or heard of him before, and as he himself wished to know whether it tallied with my own experience hitherto, I was anxious to see the paper, which ran after this manner. I had not, nor

could I have, given him any sort of information as to the date of my birth or other particulars, as I did not know of his existence.

From birth under the *Sun's* influence. Neither favourable nor unfavourable. I was weak and delicate, sometimes ill. Six years.

Next under the *Moon's* influence. Generally good; few crosses, and those which occurred resulting in good. Ten years.

Next under *Venus*. Neither good nor bad. The ordinary run of life. Seven years.

Next under *Saturn*. Bad. Losses; grief. No worldly advancement; no wealth. Never long in the same place; unsettled; frequent disappointments. Eighteen years.

Deduct on account of astrological months, five years, two months.

End of troubled period, thirty-five years, ten months.

Since when I have been under the influence of "Brihasput" or *Jupiter*, of whose sway one year is already nearly past, and it will continue from its commencement, sixteen years.

Add to the previous calculation the one year of *Jupiter*, and the result is—thirty-six years; which was my exact age. The Brahmin inquired whether that was about right, as he had

been rather bothered in the calculations regarding the moon's influence, which could not be rendered with as great certainty as the others. No one here knew my age, that I was aware of; but the result seemed to me very curious. I wished to know how the calculations had been made; but my friend could only explain them in Sanscrit, and this I did not understand. I sent the paper home to my father, and it afforded a good deal of interest and amusement to friends at home.

The details of my daily life were too monotonous to be of general interest—one day passed like another, only varied by my daily rides and drives to look after my roads and other public works; and I propose to introduce here a short sketch of the history of the Shorapoor State, which may not be uninteresting, and may serve to relieve the sameness of my story.

The Beydurs are a race of aboriginal descent, numerous in Mysore and in the Southern Mahratta country. They profess to be Hindoos, some following Sivite Brahmins, some Vishnavite, and many, perhaps most, the tenets of the Lingayets; but at heart they are believers in the original demons, sprites, and local spiritual beings in whom their ancestors had faith in the earliest

period of their race, and their worship is still actively maintained, all the opposition of the Brahmins and Lingayets notwithstanding. These spiritual creatures have various names and various attitudes, merciful, protective, and destructive, and one or other is worshipped according to necessity—for children, for good crops, for any vow made in any need or emergency, for destruction of enemies, for staying of disease among men or cattle. Sacrifices are made to rude stones in their honour; but they are not represented by images, nor do they dwell in temples. Large peepul, neem, or banian trees, and most frequently deserted spots on village boundaries, are the places which the deities are supposed to like best. Although the Beydurs arrogate to themselves pure descent from the Kshettriyas or warriors of ancient times, they have no pretension to caste, as understood in a Hindoo sense—no Hindoo, even of the lowest caste, would take water from their hands, or eat food dressed by them. In short, they are *mlechas* or outcasts, and form part of that great mass of aboriginal population which—as the Gonds, Bheels, Mangs, Santhals, and many other tribes—underlie Hindooism all over India.

In character they are violent, fickle, and often

treacherous—adepts in lawless pursuits, and often engaging in serious organised crimes, as dacoity, cattle-lifting, &c., in which they take a pride. They are brave, and Tippoo's famous infantry was mostly composed of them; but they are impatient of control and difficult to manage. In the service of the Beejanugger State, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, they were very numerous, and were at times more than a match for the Mussulmans of Gulburgah and Beeder. Among themselves they are merry and quarrelsome by turns, fond and jealous of their women, industrious in some respects, and idle in others; devoted to field-sports of all kinds—hawking, coursing, hog-hunting, and deer-shooting. None of them are mechanics or artisans in any form or degree; and but for their association with civilising Hindoo, Mussulman, and British influence, they would most likely relapse into their original savagery.

The family of Shorapoor came originally from Rutnagherry, in the Mysore territory, where they were lords of a hill-fort and a considerable district. They were one among many such "lairds" who were feudal vassals of the Hindoo State of Beejanugger, and who served their masters with all the clans of their own tribe after the first Mussulman invasion and subsequent settlement

of the invaders at Gulburgah, and declaration of independence of Delhi by Alla-ood-deen Hussun Gungoo Bahmany, in 1347. The Hindoo State of Beejanugger was obliged to defend its own frontier against Mussulman inroads ; and some of the Beydur clans were settled in the tract between the Krishna and the Tungabhadra rivers, among whom were the Beydurs of Rutnagherry.

In the wars between the Bahmany kings and the Hindoos, these Beydur clans always took a distinguished part, and afterwards in those with the Mussulman dynasty of Beejapoor ; but as the Hindoo power declined, the Shorapoor family joined the Mussulman, and became his feudal vassals. The river Krishna had been hitherto the boundary between the Hindoos and Mussulmans ; but the latter now occupied the Dooab, a tract lying between that river and the Tungabhadra. Gradually, partly by military service and partly by encroachment, the Shorapoor clans took possession of countries north of the Krishna. They built a fort at Wagingera, on the west side of the Shorapoor hills, where they became more settled and powerful, and their chiefs were raised to noble rank at the Beejapoor Court, with extensive privileges for the collection of dues from the country round, and which was, in reality, "black-mail ;" and so

matters continued till the Emperor Aurungzeeb captured Beejapoor and annexed its dominions, in 1686. The Beydur chief of Wagingera, however, resisted the Emperor for some time, and refused to come to his Court, though very earnestly and cordially entreated to do so. At length he consented; but being jeered and insulted by the courtiers, he returned to his fastness, more determined than ever to rebel. It was quite in vain that the Emperor wrote him letters of pardon and assurance, impressed with his own right hand dipped in ground sandal-wood—in vain that he wrote, “Would that you were a Mussulman! you would be to me as a brother.” No impression could he make upon the rebel chief, who was assisted and encouraged by Sivajee, and his famous commander, Dunnajee Jadow. At last the Emperor attacked Wagingera, was a second time repulsed, and it was not until after a siege lasting seven months that the fort and town of Wagingera were eventually stormed, with the aid of the army from the south, under General Zoolficar Khan. Driven from his fastness, the rebel chief, Pam Naik, selected the secluded spot where Shorapoor now stands. Its proper name is “Soor-poor,” the “City of Valour.” Here he was allowed to live in peace, and eventually became

good friends with the Emperor, who bestowed high titles upon him, created him a "Commander of Five Thousand," conferred on him a large addition to his territory, confirming all previous grants by the Beejapoor monarchy, and also extended his collections from villages over a great portion of the Deccan and Carnatic.

As the Mussulman power declined, the Beydur chiefs maintained their position, and though nominally tributary to the Peshwabs, never performed actual service. If their district collections were interfered with, they plundered the Peshwah's country till the interference was withdrawn. They were in a somewhat similar position with Nizamool-Molk, who was Viceroy in the Deccan; and when the Nizam and the Peshwah concluded their treaty at Yatgeer, on the frontier of Shorapoor, in 1785, the two Powers consulted as to whether the Beydur chief should not be at once attacked, and his dynasty suppressed as a public nuisance. The reigning Beydur chief, however, partly by showing a very bold front, and partly by the high reputation of his clan for valour, and also by agreeing to pay 50,000 rupees a-year to the Nizam, escaped the threatened danger.

The Shorapoor State was then very flourishing, the revenue being between twenty and thirty

lakhs a-year. There were two battalions of disciplined sepoy's under European commanders, and a park of artillery, and these, with the Beydur militia, 12,000 in number, and a considerable body of cavalry, made the reigning Rajah, Enkappa Naik, truly formidable. Hyder and Tippoo, each in turn, tried to induce him to join them, but he was content to remain as he was; and Tippoo, though he overran part of the neighbouring District, made no attempt to attack Shorapoor.

Enkappa Naik was a great patron of Hindoo learning, and established a Sanscrit College, which I found still existing in a reduced form. He was a good soldier, and skilful administrator, according to the customs of his tribe, and the manner in which he brought his principality out of the troubles and difficulties of those times was truly admirable; but the fortune of the State passed away with him.

The Mahrattas grew stronger, and sweeping away the Shorapoor dues from their district, imposed instead heavy demands on Shorapoor. The Nizam repudiated Aurungzeeb's grants, and annexed all the territory north of the Bheema river. In the State was not only bad administration, but waste and extravagance. On the death of the

late Rajah's father, the Nizam's Government demanded a succession fee, or *nuzzerana*, of fifteen lakhs, which the then Resident at the Court of Hyderabad, Mr Martin, declared to be an "equitable addition to the Nizam's Government." The amount was partly paid in cash, and, except the final balance of four and a half lakhs, by loans taken upon British security from the Gosain bankers of Shorapoor, year by year, until Rajah Krishnappa Naik died, the State being then virtually insolvent.

It was soon afterwards committed to my care, in the hope that, in some degree, the past might be redeemed, and the family placed in more comfortable circumstances for the future.

This short sketch will, at any rate, show the reader that the Shorapoor family was one of the oldest, and the most distinguished of the Deccan; that they had attained high rank under the Bahmany and Adil Shahy as well as the Moghul dynasties; had been respected by the Peshwahs and Tippoo: and if, through misfortune and bad government, they had fallen into a lower grade of power and wealth, they deserved better treatment than they had received at the hands of the British Government in its intervention.

After my first tour through my districts the

agricultural classes became anxious for a settled revenue, and spontaneously offered me a gradual increase for a term of five years. I could not at once grant it, nor during the uncertainty of political affairs could I even propose any such settlement to the people as an advantage.

Now, however, all hindrances had been removed, and I considered that such an arrangement would conduce to the welfare of the people. I had no actual data, by survey or measurement, for assessing the land; but the old accounts in the possession of village registrars were freely brought forward, and the assessment made by a former Rajah, fifty years ago, "Enkappa Naik the Great," was accepted by all as just, and was a good foundation on which to begin.

Between this assessment and the present one existing, a mean was struck, and the difference in prices of grain, &c., and the amount alienated in grants, were all allowed for. The maximum of settlement was then decided, and fairly distributed over lands under cultivation and waste, for which the rates at first settled by me were the standard.

The people seemed quite content, and in some instances offered an increase on the rates of their own accord; but of course the settlement was very roughly done, and not with the accuracy

with which one founded on an actual survey could have been executed. At all events, it opened up the road to the employment of local capital, and, above all, it satisfied the people.

My own work was, of necessity, very heavy, but proceeded very successfully, as one by one the different districts were arranged on five years' leases, and the result in the immediate application of capital to the reclamation of waste lands was most satisfactory. The rents were regularly paid, and the crops and harvest exceptionally good, and I anticipated a very favourable balance-sheet.

One instance I record, among many, which I gave in letters to my father.

"The *patell* or head man of a large village where I was encamped, had been very poor, and was thoroughly disheartened by repeated exactions. His wife, a homely, excellent woman, had complained to my dear wife that her husband was idle, and begged I would speak to him. 'If he wants money,' she said, 'I will pledge every ornament I have to buy bullocks.' I, however, assisted him from the State with sufficient money to set him up. This year the man and his wife came to me together, and she was the speaker.

" 'God has prospered us,' she cried; 'we have

now 32 bullocks, besides cows and buffaloes : we used to pay 32 rupees, but all our land is cultivated now, and we pay 322 rupees ;' and there were hundreds and hundreds like him, prosperous, secure, and thankful."

I was then on the right bank of the Bheema, and one day received a deputation from a large village called Sinnoor, on the left bank, the estate of an officer of the Nizam's household who had charge of the royal tent establishment, and I went to them next day. The village women and children, all neatly dressed, met me, poured libations of water before my horse, and offered me flowers and garlands. A carpet was spread in the *patell's* house, and I sat with the assembly for a long time, hearing accounts of how the Beydurs used to come in bodies, cut down their crops, drive off their cattle, and keep them in perpetual fear. Now all was secure, not a head of corn was touched, and all their distant lands were under cultivation, as well as those near to their dwellings. The same Beydurs who used to plunder them came unarmed to their weekly market, and all was peace.

Many men showed me scars of sword and bullet wounds received in those affrays, and indeed the whole frontier must have been in a sad

state. I need hardly tell you how very gratifying this visit was to me, and it was followed by many others to my frontier neighbours with the same result.

If I have as yet left the affairs of Scinde unnoticed, in regard to the great political transactions of Lord Ellenborough's government of India, it is because they have long since become subjects of general history ; commented upon by all writers, and therefore beyond the province of this record of my life. During the process of annexation, however, I watched the progress of Sir Charles Napier with the keenest interest. Outram was one of my earliest and closest Indian friends, and we corresponded as frequently as his and my own heavy duties allowed of. I do not believe that Lord Ellenborough ever desired the conquest or the annexation of Scinde ; but he was in the hands of a man who, led on by personal unscrupulous ambition and daring, which no one can question, formed, as it appears to me, from the beginning, the resolution of displacing the Ameers, and, regarding its strategical importance, of converting Scinde into a British province. History and Sir William Napier's 'Conquest of Scinde' tell how this was achieved : how, by one traitor among their brotherhood, Ali Moorad, Sir Charles was

misled and deceived; how the Ameers were literally goaded on to war, and defeated in the bloody battles of Meeanee and Dubba, and lost their State and their treasure.

In my letters to the 'Times,' I was able, with my friend's assistance, to detail the progress of political events as they occurred; and I believe I told the truth, without sparing any. No one could question the high military capacity and valour by which the victories were won by a handful, comparatively, of British soldiers, against perhaps the bravest Indian troops that ever took the field, and whose numbers far exceeded those of the British forces.

By the splendour of these victories, the people of England were perhaps dazzled, and the political events of the time were thrown into the shade; but they are ineffaceable, and will remain for ever a blot upon the record of Indian history; not as the effect of any national or Governmental policy, but as the consequence of the acts of one man who, uncontrolled, had entered Scinde under a foregone conclusion, and brought about the result. Lord Ellenborough could be just and merciful in the case of Gwalior, the troops of which were more treacherous and more dangerous to the peace of India than the Beloochees of Scinde; and

it is difficult to estimate why he confirmed Napier's aggressive policy in the one instance, while he contradicted it in the affair of Gwalior, which he conducted in person. In both these instances the troops of the State were the aggressors, not the principals themselves, and except for one man's ambition the results would have been the same.

In a short time, comparatively, Sir William Napier's glorification of his brother appeared in the 'Conquest of Scinde.'

It was impossible for Outram to remain silent under the attacks made upon him and his reputed share in these political transactions, and I, and many other friends, urged him to write and publish a vindication of his acts, and a revelation of facts, which in Sir William's book were either omitted or glozed over to justify Sir Charles's execution of his mission. Sir Charles had taken £70,000 as his share of the Ameer's wealth. Outram, a poor man, had declined to receive a penny of the proceeds, though his share was a large one, and therefore he was entirely independent. He roused himself to the task, and wrote, sending the manuscript to me for approval and correction, and I cheered him on. At first his expressions were laboured; but his style soon

became clear and vigorous. It was the fashion, when his commentary appeared, to say that Outram never wrote a word of it, and that he was unable to do so; but if such an opinion still lingers in any mind, I can at least declare that I saw and read the whole from beginning to end in his own handwriting, bold and large. I advised him to have the document roughly set up and printed in Bombay, and then sent home for final reprinting, after being duly corrected for the press, and I myself revised all the proofs, suggesting here and there rearrangement of the matter, so as to form a more continuous narrative and commentary; and, so revised, the whole was forwarded to Edinburgh, where it was finally published. I altered none of the writing, and the book is as I saw it when in manuscript, with the excision only of any repetitions, and here and there a slight variation in the arrangement of detail. I kept the original letters and much of the manuscript by me for many years.

Whether Scinde was a profitable annexation or not was a question deeply considered by Lord Hardinge's Government, and by the Court of Directors, who at one time appeared very much disposed to repudiate the conquest altogether; and in my opinion it would have been well to have

done so on the discovery of Ali Moorad's treachery.

Sir Charles was very sensitive on this point, and issued one of his famous proclamations "To his Soldiers" to prove that Scinde was profitable, and that he had actually remitted revenue from it. This assertion was taken up by the press of India very earnestly; but as no details were given on the other side, Sir Charles had pretty much his own way. I, however, was supplied from my own sources of information in Scinde and Bombay with authentic copies of unpublished public accounts; and was permitted to use them. I saw I could prove by the details that if Sir Charles remitted ten lakhs (£100,000) of surplus revenue from the province, after paying all its civil charges, that in reality on the military side the cost was a million and a half sterling, for which there was no provision at all! And with the consent of the editor of one of the leading papers I opened a series of letters on the subject of this costly annexation and its political character. Occasionally these were answered by an article in Sir Charles's defence, very ably and speciously worded; but they could not bear down the weight of actual results, and after a while the editor gave judgment in my favour so warmly

and heartily for the public service I had rendered, that I was amply rewarded for my trouble.

Whether the conquest of Scinde now pays its expenses I know not—in any case it is well governed and prosperous. No question could be raised as to its importance in a strategical point of view ; but the mode of its acquisition is a dark blot on the record of Indian history.



END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.



10.9.58

